THE

BEGGAR GIRL

AND

HER BENEFACTORS.

IN FIVE VOLUMES.

BY MRS. BENNETT,

AUTHOR OF

WELCH HEIRESS, JUVENILE INDISCRETIONS, AGNES DE-COURCI,
AND ELLEN, COUNTESS OF CASTLE HOWELL.

A poem, a drama, a novel, which represents virtue in lively colours, models the reader on the virtuous characters, who act without his perceiving it; they become interesting, and the author inculcates morality without seeming to mention it.

LE MERCIER

VOL. V.

SECOND EDITION.

LONDON:
PRINTED AT THE
Minerva-Press,
FOR WILLIAM LANE, LEADENHALL-STREET.
1799.

BRITISH MUSEUM
15 NOV 65

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THE

BEGGAR GIRL.

CHAP. I.

"I find this pretty, ſaid Gargantu, when his mare, a beaſt of quality, laid waſte the neighbouring woods."

IT was near ſix when Roſa paſſed through a wilderneſs of ſweets to Delworth Houſe, where the only domeſtic ſtirring was the dairy-maid, who, rejoicing at her return, haſtened to tell how the family were alarmed at her abſence, how the ſervants had been ſent different ways in ſearch after her, and how ſorry they all were ſhe was not found.

Roſa thanked the girl for her ſolicitude, and went immediately to her chamber, when it ſtruck her, for the firſt time, that it would be indiſpenſably neceſſary to adduce ſome motives for abſenting herſelf during a

whole night, not only to the principals, but even to the domeſtics of the family where ſhe reſided.

To reveal the name and family of the unfortunate miſtreſs at Denningcourt Caſtle, was what ſhe reſolved not to do; yet how to avoid it, without leaving a ſtigma on her own character, was a point that embarraſſed her. She remembered the late-diſcovered traits in the character of Lady Gauntlet, which proved her not the all-perfect creature ſhe once eſteemed her; but while ſhe had the honour to reſide under the Earl's roof, no doubt the Counteſs would expect the elucidation of ſo extraordinary a ſtep, nor would Mrs. Woudbe feel leſs anxious that a young perſon under her protection, ſhould clear every imputation on her character.

The more ſhe reflected, the more difficult appeared her ſituation; but ſhe at length reſolved to reveal all the circumſtances in confidence to Lady Gauntlet, whoſe wiſdom and policy ſhe had ſo often admired, and be guided by her in reſpect to the explanations proper to be given to the family.

Having thus ſettled this embarraſſing point, her next conſideration was, that it would be little leſs indelicate to have any connexions at the caſtle, than to repeat her viſits there; and therefore the ſooner ſhe made up her packet for John, the ſooner he would ſet off to Scotland, and the ſooner alſo would all oſtenſible intercourſe at Lord Denningcourt's ceaſe.

Colonel

Colonel Buhanun's letters were a treaſure that always made part of her baggage; and her mind being too much agitated for ſleep, ſhe arranged the packets before her, according to their ſeveral dates; and having ſpread a napkin on the carpet to receive thoſe not relevant to the point ſhe had at heart, ſhe ſelected thoſe that were, and incloſing them with a letter from herſelf to Doctor Cameron in one envelope, was on the point of ſealing it, when, recollecting one particular letter of the Colonel's, in which his faithful ſervant was more warmly mentioned than in thoſe ſhe had ſelected, which were not among the reſt, ſhe removed ſome clothes to ſearch for it, with ſuch impetuoſity, that a ſmall box, committed to her eſpecial care by Mrs. Woudbe, dropped down; the lock burſt, and a number of papers falling out, they mixed promiſcuouſly with the Colonel's letters.

A more vexatious accident could not happen to one who, of all the deſcendants of Eve, had the leaſt diſpoſition to pry into other people's affairs.

But as regret for the accident would not replace the papers in the box, her firſt thought was to lock her chamber-door, acquaint Mrs. Woudbe with what had happened, and requeſt her to divide the papers herſelf; but, like many others of the firſt thoughts of ſages under twenty, that would not do; for, in that caſe, all the directions of her own letters would be ſeen, and muſt lead to explanations as unpleaſant to Lady Gauntlet as diſagreeable to herſelf, ſince ſhe

could not allow the having been known by two names, without aſſigning a motive, which would directly contradict the good report given of her by that lady when ſhe declared the family and connexion of our heroine were perfectly known to her.

Beſides, Mrs. Woudbe was ſtill either in the arms of Morpheus, or ſhe was calling down the vengeance of the gods on her cruel natural brother; in either caſe, her bed was not likely to be diſcarded for the fineſt morning that ever ſhone out of the heavens; and waiting for her riſing would retard the packet for John, and delay his journey to the North. Well then, on ſecond thoughts, which moſt people think beſt, why ſhould ſhe heſitate about dividing the papers herſelf? ſure her diſcretion, and more, her honour, would ſtand the teſt of her own ſecret tribunal; and well might others doubt, who doubted themſelves.

Behold her then, on her knees, dividing and ſubdividing. The covers were all addreſſed to her, and the hand-writing that of the dear natural brother: one packet only lay among the reſt, about which ſhe was doubtful, as it was incloſed in an envelope, without ſeal or addreſs.

Roſa had employed ſome of her leiſure hours, ſince ſhe had been at Delworth, in copying ſome ſonnets from the Welch bards, a collection ſhe had never ſeen before; and as it was an expenſive one, thought it likely ſhe might never meet it again: theſe ſhe had folded

folded up in a blank ſheet, and put careleſſly among her papers.

Now, whether the cover ſhe held in her hand was that, or whether it was part of Mrs. Woudbe's precious depoſit, could only be proved by opening; it was not the ſonnets—that was clear at the firſt glance; but a combination of letters, more muſical than all Handel's compoſition, arreſted every ſenſe: this was—

"Your faithful and adoring,

"H. MONTREVILLE."

She ſunk on the ground, turned firſt red, then pale, and indeed experienced the ſeveral ſenſations inſeparable from the divine paſſion, when the heart is rather diſpoſed

"To ſuffer love as a painful ſentiment, than to enjoy it as an agreeable emotion;"

from which ſhe recovered, as is uſual in ſuch caſes, on a ſudden recollection, which had neither rhyme nor reaſon in it.

The little portmanteau, which had been the companion of her humble travels, lay conveniently enough in Mrs. Woudbe's travelling trunk;—in it ſhe had packed her papers and other *petites affaires*, together with the box entruſted to her care. Now, as the "faithful and adoring Montreville" could not be addreſſed to any creature but herſelf, it was clear as the ſun, which at that moment, three quarters paſt ſeven, gilded the hemiſphere, that the Pontefract

chamber-maid had been prevailed on to ſlide this precious letter into the little portmanteau, which the moſt ſcrupulous delicacy did not forbid her now to read.

With trembling fingers, burning cheeks, and beating heart, then, ſhe read—

"*My dareſt woman,*"—bold enough, however, and not vaſtly polite, ſhe thought—"*how could you ſo cruelly diſappoint me?*"—well, that was better.—"*To be ſhure, my dareſt, pretty crater,*"—Heavens! could that be Montreville? and to Roſa? ſure he muſt have been delirious!—"*you muſt know, nothing is ſo dare to me as your dare ſelf. I kept my eye on Madam Devildom—what's her cramp name's door.*"—"What ſtuff is here!" cried Roſa, turning the paper again to look at the ſignature. "Yes, it is Montreville—'H. Montreville.' The man muſt have been deranged!" She, however, proceeded, till the paper dropped from her nerveleſs fingers.

While, therefore, the room turns round with Roſa; while, even when ſcorched by the ſun, the world is to her one black curtain, and while ſhe ſtaggers to the window for air, the reader is preſented with the whole of the extraordinary letter.

"MY DAREST WOMAN,

"*How could you ſo cruelly diſappoint me?—To be ſhure, my dare pretty crater, you muſt know, nothing is ſo*

ſo dare to me as your dare ſelf. I kept my eye on Madam Devildom—what's her cramp name's door; but Oh! Hyenna! as you are, you never camed at all, but ſent my pretty correſpondent. Devil take me, my charmer, if I was not in ſuch a hurrecan of a fury, that, faith, I was near beating up your quarters to brake every bone in your ugly huſband's ſkin; and, to be ſhure, if love for you, my dare woman, had not come in in the nick, I dare ſay my paſſion would have told him all, and more too; for if a man loves a dare woman to death, he is uſed like a dog;—and how, my dare crater, can you think the great blood boiling over in my veins, can ſtoop to receive obligations from any dare hand but your own. If you think to deceive me, faith, my dare woman, you reckon wrong—for I ſhall hate you; and when a man hates a dare woman after ſhe has made him happy, ſtop him who can?—So, my charming woman, let us be faithful and loving, and not do things by deputy—by way of witneſs. I ſaw Miſs Walſingham go to Crox; but though the cauſe ſtands ſtill for want of caſh, I ſcorn to take the baubles from any but yourſelf; and I adverti ſe you I have changed my lodging; but you may write to the old place. The affair comes on directly—nothing wanting but my dareſt woman to be true to her faithful and adoring

" H. MONTREVILLE.

" *N. B. Conſider, dare woman, this maſquerade is nothing to what you will treat all the world with when you are a Counteſs; and may the next thing I put in my*

mouth be poiſon, if I, when I am Earl of Gauntlet, don't give your huſband the go-by, and let him prove himſelf a cuckold, which is a genteeler thing than a dirty commoner has any right to expect, and marry you, my dare woman, next day."

If the reader expects to be told with what alternate burſts of anguiſh and indignation Roſa read the letters of the "faithful, adoring Montreville," it is an unreaſonable expectation; for no language is equal to the taſk. True, it had not come to her hands by the direct and fair means that would juſtify the ſentiments it inſpired, to thoſe who had in their own hearts the beſt reaſon for doubting the veracity of others; but Roſa was not now to learn that criminality is attached to the motive, not the event of our actions; nor that equity weighs the former, while frailty and prejudice are guided by the latter.

Self-acquitted then, nothing could divert her horror and aſtoniſhment from the myſtery, wickedneſs, and cunning of the letter, which proved that Montreville, preſumptive heir to the Earldom of Gauntlet, and Mrs. Woudbe's pretended natural brother, was one and the ſame perſon, and a confederate in a ſcene of iniquity too evident for candour's ſelf to doubt.

The juſt indignation Roſa conceived, on finding ſhe had been the convenience of a licentious commerce, was followed by a deteſtation of Mrs. Woudbe,

and

and compaſſion for her huſband; ſuch atrocious wickedneſs, ſuch ingratitude, never, never, Roſa was ſure, could have been before committed by a matron, a mother (almoſt a grandmother); one to whom ſo many looked up, but on whom all, who *knew* her, muſt look down. Nothing, indeed, leſs than the evidence of her ſenſes, having been innocently employed in the horrid buſineſs, having ſeen him watch her to La Croix's, and ſuppoſing he would indeed be an Earl, could convince her "ſuch things are."

But Roſa had not lived with ladies of Utopia in the year 1797; and therefore, warm with reſentment for the degrading inſult offered her character by the impoſition, with the letter in her hand, ſcalding tears on her cheek, and her face and neck burning with heat, ſhe appeared, unannounced, before Lady Gauntlet in her dreſſing-room.

Her Ladyſhip, it has been before obſerved, loſt no time in any of her arrangements: ſhe was now up, and had not only made inquiry after Roſa, but knew where ſhe paſſed the night;—not that ſhe was an abſolute witch; for the good creature, whoſe character ſuffered by waiting on poor Kattie, having once been an uſeful domeſtic of Lady Gauntlet's, continued to pay her court, by bringing or ſending to Delworth, anecdotes as they occurred at Denningcourt Caſtle; among theſe, that the moſt welcome, was the certainty that the poor miſtreſs was a falling favourite.

The Counteſs's paſſion was, as the philoſopher ſaid of the *paſſions* of young men, "Not truly in her heart, but in her eyes, and always inflamed after every interview." She had, for the firſt time ſince her arrival at Delworth, met Lord Denningcourt, in her ride, on the morning before; and as it was an eſtabliſhed maxim with her, that nothing inſpires ſo ſtrong an inclination for a new miſtreſs, as being heartily tired of an old one; and though ſhe had already more affairs on her hands than any woman beſide herſelf could poſſibly manage; and though his Lordſhip neither paid nor received any viſits, ſhe ſent him a card, inviting him to meet her, on *buſineſs*, in a pretty temple at the extremity of Delworth woods, adjoining his own demeſne.

Lord Denningcourt, though punctual to time and place, was ſo inſufferably ſtupid, that her Ladyſhip was quite out of patience, and would have been at a loſs for *buſineſs* to entertain him with, had not her kindneſs to Roſa, on his account, occurred.

Lord Denningcourt admired Roſa's beauty, but ſhe had not intereſted his paſſions; he knew Mrs. Woudbe well, and he was intimate with Lord Aaron Horſemagog; he could therefore readily credit the report which, through his valet, reached him of that nobleman's adding the companion of ſuch a woman to his liſt. He certainly thought our heroine's countenance innocent and intereſting; but as he had thought ſo of many other countenances, which he afterwards diſ-

covered

covered to be viſors, there was nothing extraordinary in the affair; he therefore yawned cold thanks, played with his dogs, complained of time, and ſauntered off, leaving the fair lady ſo mortified, diſappointed, and enraged, that, ſtrange to tell, ſhe actually wept.

But ſuch ſtrangers as tears were not to be encouraged on Lady Gauntlet's downy cheeks; deſpiſing Lord Denningcourt, and even herſelf, ſhe returned home to ſmile, and be all grace and goodneſs;—but, ſpite of her entire command of features, the contempt with which the bewitching Denningcourt had treated her, baniſhed ſleep from her eyes; and a note from the handmaid at the caſtle, delivered before ſhe was up next morning, was ill calculated to ſmooth her brow when Roſa entered; who, beſides the culpable appearance which ſtaying out all night gave her character, had now, and that unſuſpected by herſelf, the jealous pride of a vindictive woman to appeaſe.

At Denningcourt! Miſs Walſingham at Denningcourt! there then was a ſolution of Lord Denningcourt's coldneſs, not only to his miſtreſs, for that was natural enough, but to her, which was as unnatural; Oh the ſpecious, deceitful thing!

The "ſpecious deceitful thing" was now before her, agitated, trembling, and panting for breath; ſhe preſented the open letter to the Counteſs, and, overcome by a variety of ſtruggling paſſions, ſunk on the ſofa, without noticing the frown of her patroneſs.

Nothing mortal occupied her but the arch diſſembler, Montreville, and the deſpicable Mrs. Woudbe.

Lady Gauntlet, having read the letter through, without betraying any of thoſe marks of indignant ſurpriſe Roſa expected, coolly demanded how it came into her hands? "You have not, Miſs, I hope," ſaid ſhe, "betrayed any confidence to get it?"

"Confidence!" repeated Roſa—her face in a glow.

"Confidence is not leſs ſacred, Miſs, becauſe ſome trifling cenſure may happen to be attached to the perſon who repoſes it."

Trifling cenſure! the words rung hollow on Roſa's ear, but did not prevent her exonerating herſelf from the implied accuſation.

Lady Gauntlet anſwered with *ſang froid*, that it was mighty well; in the intercourſe of the world, it was often neceſſary to be ignorant of what one knew, and totally forget what one remembered:—there was but one thing in the letter ſhe did not comprehend.

One thing! and but *one* thing! Heaven and earth! was this Lady Gauntlet? was it a wife—a mother? was it, indeed, according to her idea of womanhood, a woman?

"What is all this about the jewels?" aſked the Counteſs.

Roſa's anſwer would have been unintelligible to any perſon leſs acute and experienced than her beautiful Ladyſhip; but, as we have ſaid of Lord Denningcourt,

ningcourt, nothing was new to her under the ſun, except the preciſe feelings which at this moment wrung her heart—"wounded pride, and ill requited love," or ſome ſuch paſſion; and it was with ſecret triumph ſhe ſaw the heart of her innocent rival flutter through her tucker, with emotions ſomewhat ſimilar.

"I told you," ſaid ſhe, with one of her beſt ſmiles, "the young man's character would open as you knew him better:—he is really a clever fellow, with his pretty creature!—Only that poor Woudbe is below ridicule, or this would be a companion to the jewels of the Portugueſe. Upon my honour, Miſs Walſingham, it is paying you a ſorry compliment to prefer Woudbe to you; but men are capricious animals; I adviſe you, if not too late, to ſhun them."

Roſa's fixed eyes were on the Counteſs, really ſtarting out of her head.

"This Montreville," continued the Counteſs, "knows what he is about; he has *fairly* taken Woudbe in.—I ſay *fairly*, becauſe her intrigues have been too various to be ſuſpected of ſacrificing intereſt to a paſſion ſhe has worn to rags; but, like her huſband, ſhe lays out her property to advantage: he muſt marry her—no man of honour or honeſty can go from ſuch a promiſe."

"*Honour* and *honeſty!*" repeated Roſa with contempt.

"Are they not ſynonymous, Miſs Walſingham?"

"Not

"Not exactly, I believe, Madam. Every honeſt man will certainly be a man of honour; but every man of honour, ſuch, at leaſt, as I have lately heard ſo diſtinguiſhed, is——"

"Not honeſt, perhaps, you think. How accurately you diſtinguiſh!—but don't be too ſevere; you are jealous, child—you don't like a rival—few people do. What would you ſay, if you were obliged to reſign a title and its appendages—and your *friend*, if you pleaſe, entertained you with anticipations of an event that would inveſt her with the honours you loſt? This I *have* borne; and how do you think I *could* bear it? Why by more certain anticipations of the downfal of her card-houſes. But really I begin to think I ſhall have the honour to congratulate her Counteſsſhip after all; the man has ſo committed himſelf——"

Roſa's claſped hands, uplifted eyes, and the horror and averſion portrayed in every ſpeaking feature, interrupted her Ladyſhip. She ſcarce articulated, "The confidant! are you then the confidant of ſuch a tranſaction? What myſtery, what ſhocking myſtery, what enchantment is this? How can the tongue expatiate on female honour? How can it profeſs to adore virtue, when the heart is ſo tainted?"

Lady Gauntlet aroſe. "How dare——"

"Spare your paſſion, Lady Gauntlet—my fear of you expired with my reſpect."

"And

"And is this the return for my kindneſs, my condeſcenſion?"

"Yes, Madam, by kindly placing me under the roof of an infamous woman, you have inſulted me; and by condeſcending to act a part under her, you have degraded yourſelf, your ſex, your family, and your children."

It was now Lady Gauntlet who was confounded. She had, preſuming on the uniform mildneſs of Roſa's character, fancied ſhe could frown her to an atom; inſtead of which, it was herſelf who was awed—it was, however, but for a moment.

"Keep your temper, Miſs," ſaid ſhe; "I am a confidant, though not *your's*, of your ſleeping laſt night at Denningcourt Caſtle; and ſurely, if people ſhould be ſo malicious as to fix a ſtigma on ſuch a ſtep, and if regard for the honour of my family ſhould oblige me to diſcard a young perſon who ſo offended decency, as to make a nocturnal viſit to a nobleman of Lord Denningcourt's character, my ſubſequent knowledge of the tranſaction would not implicate me in the guilt."

"If it were as eaſy, Madam, for your friend to prove her honour, as it is for me to manifeſt my innocence——"

"What, then," and a ray of pleaſure darted from Lady Gauntlet's eyes, "you deny you was at Denningcourt Caſtle?"

"No, I do not."

"You did not ſleep there?"

"No, I did not."

"Nor ſtay there the night?"

"Yes, I did."

"Imprudent wretch! leave my preſence before I ſpurn you hence."

Roſa did as ſhe was commanded, ſecretly rejoicing that the diſcovery of Mrs. Woudbe's infamy had preceded the unlimited confidence ſhe meant to have placed in Lady Gauntlet. Her diſmiſſal from the family was, as ſhe now conſidered it, a thing of courſe; and though it reduced her to the neceſſity of ſeeking another ſituation, ſhe had Mr. Garnet's comfortable aſylum: thither ſhe reſolved to go after John was diſpatched to Scotland. She immediately cloſed the packet for him; but the ſending it off was a matter of more difficulty than might be expected, from a houſe where there were ſo many domeſtics, by thoſe who do not underſtand the magic, that in an inſtant conveys the ſentiments which actuate the Lord or Lady, or maſter or miſtreſs, of a great family to their ſervants.

Firſt, Mrs. Modely, my Lady's woman, had always thought Miſs Walſingham, who, as only humble companion, when turned out of one place, could not perhaps get another, need not have been ſet above her, who would not turn her back on any one, in any thing about a Lady; for her part, ſhe thought what it would come to; but as Miſs was then ſtuck up at the

firſt

firſt table, ſhe would not now ſit down at the ſecond with a perſon who ſtopped all night with gentlemen.

My Lord's valet thought her a deviliſh fine creature; but as he ſuppoſed Lady Gauntlet would not approve of it, he would not take any notice of her. On the credit of thoſe high perſonages then, there was not a ſervant in the houſe who did not either turn up their noſes or laugh out right, when our heroine was in their ſight.

Roſa ſaw all this, without feeling the ſmalleſt reſentment; ſhe was conſcious that her conduct did ſtand juſtly impeached, and reſolved not to give the only explanation that could do away the imputations on her character, as that would lead to circumſtances which muſt expoſe the child of her deceaſed friend, and, by diſcloſing her name and ſituation, render the latent hope ſhe fondly indulged, of ſeeing her the wife of her ſeducer, abortive.

The only thing in the behaviour of the ſervants that hurt her was, the impoſſibility of ſending her packet to John through them; but as the out-door domeſtics might not yet have adopted the ſame conduct, or if they had, might be eaſier prevailed on to change it on certain conditions, ſhe walked into the garden, and eaſily prevailed on an old labourer, who was employed to roll the lawn, to be her meſſenger to Denningcourt Caſtle.

Having completed this important affair, ſhe returned to her chamber; and, after dividing the preſents

ſents of both her patroneſſes from her own clothes, and packing the latter in her portmanteau, and the other in two parcels, replaced Mrs. Woudbe's letters in the box, which, as the lock was broke, ſhe faſtened with tape; and having ſealed it, without the ſmalleſt inclination to read another line of the "faithful and adoring Montreville's" writing, ſhe carried it to Mrs. Woudbe's chamber, or rather her chamber-door; for there Mrs. Jup, her woman, ſtood ſentry. Nobody could be admitted, ſhe ſaid, as her miſtreſs was quite ill with the fright at Miſs Walſingham's ſtaying out all night, which, to be ſure, was a little oddiſh, though, as Mrs. Modely ſaid, no more than might be expected.

Now this was a little fib of Mrs. Jup's; for though Mrs. Woudbe was certainly ill enough at eaſe, ſhe was able to receive and hold a long and intereſting converſation with her friend Lady Gauntlet, who was at that preciſe moment deep in her trouble and counſels.

Roſa, however, returned to her chamber, deſiring to be informed when Mrs. Woudbe was diſpoſed to ſee her.

As any further favours from Lady Gauntlet were as little expected as deſired, and as ſhe waited to diſmiſs herſelf from the place ſhe was ſo ill qualified to fill, her thoughts naturally recurred to the mode of returning to London.

John

John had mentioned his being ſet down from the ſtage at Denningcourt; and as it was now probable ſhe muſt be taken up at the ſame place, and that, inſtead of rolling thither, as ſhe had twice done ſince her reſidence at Delworth-houſe, in a ſplendid equipage, ſhe muſt be content to be carried there by her own ſtraight limbs, ſhe threw up the ſaſh, to trace with her eye the neareſt way.

Denningcourt was ſituated on a ſmall eminence, a few fields diſtant from the new jointure-houſe in Denningcourt park; and as the day was remarkably clear, ſhe could diſtinctly ſee the path from Delworth woods, through the park, by the fine new houſe, to the village.

She then caſt a tearful eye on the ſombre grandeur of the old caſtle, where the guilty, miſerable Kättie wept over errors ſhe had not reſolution to forſake, and where every night ſhe was entombed with her dead ſon. Sad were the reflections this thought gave riſe to, and no leſs grievous than unavoidable was the ſtern neceſſity of withholding from the forlorn beauty the comfort and relief of her ſociety. The unconſcious tear ſtood on her cheek, when Mrs. Jup brought a note from Mrs. Woudbe, to decline ſeeing her on the ſcore of ill health, but to ſay her woman would report any meſſage ſhe might chuſe to deliver.

Roſa choſe to write; and Mrs. Jup not only carried a ſhort note, but what was almoſt as welcome to

Mrs.

Mrs. Woudbe as her caſket of jewels could have been, the box of letters.

The dinner hour having paſſed without a ſummons to Roſa, or any notice taken of her billet to Mrs. Woudbe, incloſing the balance of the fifty pounds received from her, after deducting what was due according to agreement, every moment's ſtay in a houſe where ſhe was ſhunned by the family, and neglected by the domeſtics, became more irkſome than the laſt.

She had now as little confidence in the honour as in the humanity of her two patroneſſes: and therefore, as the arrangement of her journey from a place to which ſhe was a ſtranger, would, in all probability, depend on herſelf, it ſtruck her, as the afternoon was fine, that, by walking to Denningcourt, ſhe might learn every particular reſpecting the London ſtage, as well as reconnoitre the inn, where it was not unlikely ſhe would be obliged to wait its paſſing; accordingly, having dreſſed herſelf in the black habit Mrs. Feverſham called old and ruſty, ſhe left Mrs. Woudbe's "*heaven.*"

She had ſcarce turned into the ſerpentine walk, before a maid ſervant overtook her with a letter. "Our folks are all ſo comical," ſaid the girl, "that none of the men would carry your letter up, though it lay on the ſteward's table all day. Lord! as ſure as death, there's Parſon Brudenel and Lady Louiſa! if they meet me, I ſhall loſe my place."

Roſa,

Roſa, as little deſirous of an interview with any of the family as the maid, turned into one path as ſhe returned to the houſe by the other; and anxious to avoid notice, walked a conſiderable way before ſhe obſerved the ſuperſcription of the letter was in the hand-writing of the now deteſtable "H. Montreville."

All her blood ruſhed to her face—the letter was thrown on the ground, and trod on; then recollecting that, as it was addreſſed to her, however odious the contents, whoever picked it up would ſuppoſe it belonged to her; no, ſhe would tear it to atoms. In that moment the Major's red coat, who, like other "home-keeping youths," paſſed his hours in "ſhapeleſs idleneſs," appearing through the foliage, ſuſpended the fate of the unfortunate letter; ſhe haſtily put it in her pocket, and hurried on, till, entering Denningcourt park, ſhe ſaw the village before her; and reflecting that ſhe was again on the point of becoming an helpleſs, unprotected wanderer, in a world where ſhe might not find relation or friend, her mind became ſo ſadly occupied, that ſhe no longer thought of Mrs. Woudbe or her letter.

CHAP.

CHAP. II.

Proving that all Lords and Ladies are not exactly alike; and ſhewing a new friend with an old face.

IT was not poſſible for any two ladies of the ſame rank to differ more than her, whoſe roof our heroine was preparing to abandon, and her, by whoſe charming reſidence the path led to Denningcourt village.

Inborn greatneſs might, indeed, be expected, in a ſuperior degree, to preſide in the ſoul of the latter, as ſhe was the only remaining child of the Duke of Athelane, a nobleman, who inherited, from a long line of anceſtry, the honour, as well as title, of his diſtinguiſhed predeceſſors. The election of Lady Elinor, his lovely daughter, would, it was reported, have been made in favour of a ſingle life, had not the Duke, who never recovered the double loſs of a beloved wife and amiable ſon, by a domeſtic calamity, prevailed on her to become Counteſs of Denningcourt a ſhort time previous to his death.

But although the misfortune that eventually deprived the young lady of both her parents, ſaddened the ſweet expreſſion of every feature in her mild countenance; though joy was baniſhed from her heart, and love's inverted torch withered every bloſſom of delight in her boſom, her whole conduct was regulated

lated by native honour, dignity of ſoul, and meek forbearance; no jarring atom formed a particle in her whole ſyſtem; ſhe had not even the idea of malignity or ill-humour; and never was ſenſe ſo juſt and refined, adorned by a ſimplicity ſo artleſs and graceful: her countenance bore the immediate mark of whatever ſentiment or motion her heart felt; and though the unobtruſive virtues and accompliſhments, which endeared her to the good, and extorted reſpect from the bad, were often clouded by deep and penſive thought; though, like the lone bird of night, ſhe vented the plaints of her overcharged heart in ſolitude and melancholy; yet as her thoughts were innocent, her brow was ſerene, and ſhe fulfilled every duty of a virtuous wife, and ſupported her high rank in ſociety with the grace, eaſe, and hoſpitality peculiar to the noble ſtock from whence ſhe deſcended. In ſhort, in the words of the wiſeſt of men, "her ways were the ways of pleaſantneſs, and all her paths were peace;" and that "the heart of her huſband did ſafely truſt her," was proved by the diſpoſition of his fortune a ſhort time before his death.

Lord Denningcourt was a widower at the time he became enamoured of Lady Elinor Athelane. His firſt lady was rich and well-born; two qualities that, in the opinion of his parents, whoſe choice ſhe was, atoned for the deficiencies, mental and external, his Lordſhip ſo eminently poſſeſſed in his ſecond Counteſs, and which, indeed, he had ſo ſenſibly felt the abſence of,

of, that, determining to let his only ſon, a youth of great promiſe, be the carver of his own happineſs, he gave him a ſettled and liberal eſtabliſhment before he attained his eighteenth year.

Lord Vallerton's prudence did not keep pace with his father's generoſity; he fell into the common error of young men who have too much of every thing; his friends were all of a contrary deſcription—they had too little. He had an eſtabliſhed governor of ſuch ſtrict morals, that both my Lord and his governor, happening to caſt the eye of deſire on the ſame damſel, a challenge enſued, and the event might have been fatal, had not another pretty damſel ſtarted up, and ſo attracted one or other of the heroes, that peace was eſtabliſhed. My Lord hated cards, but as it was the faſhion for young men of rank to play and to loſe, he did both; he was naturally ſober, and vaſtly averſe to morning head-ache, but his companions had no pleaſure equal to "drinking like the devil,"—ſo my Lord was never ſober: his taſte was not only for modeſt, but delicate women; but his income was ſaddled with annuities to thoſe whoſe favours he ſhared with half the town: he was juſt in principle; but there were ſo many imperceptible ways of getting deeply in debt, that by the time his Lordſhip came of age, he was a diſtreſſed man; and thoſe diſtreſſes coming to the ears of the Earl, he was ſent for, heard a grave lecture on his thoughtleſs extravagance, which concluded with directions to ſend the aggregate of his

debts to the ſteward, in order to their being immediately diſcharged.

My Lord knew very little of the matter; but his valet, who received and paid all for him, was very competent to the buſineſs; and when the indulgent father gave a check on his banker for twenty-two thouſand pounds to clear old debts, my Lord, his valet, and friends had the world before them, with freſh credit to begin anew.

Lord Vallerton was now at the head of every thing he did not like, and out of the way of every thing he did. Lord Aaron Horſemagog, ſome years indeed older than his Lordſhip, but no leſs his particular friend, enlarged, with wonderful eloquence, on the delights of the turf;—that Lord Vallerton had not yet tried—but he languiſhed for ſomething new; and his friend ſold him ſuch horſes for the Newmarket meetings as, he ſwore, could never loſe a race, but ſuch as, it was proved, could never win one; and, in four years, the Earl of Denningcourt was again informed of his ſon's diſtreſſes, and again, after a lecture, they were relieved, to the amount of forty-ſeven thouſand pounds. The lecture, however, was no longer on the thoughtleſs extravagance of youth; its ſubject was, diſhonourable and profligate purſuits, and the ſcandal which reſted on the character of a man of honour who aſſorted with, and became the prey of ſharpers, however high the rank ſuch men diſgraced; and who, unhappily inſenſible to the enchantment of female vir-

tue, was, in the very moment of voluptuouſneſs, but the ſlave of thoſe ſlaves to many, who were ready to ſacrifice him to the next comer.

Lord Vallerton bluſhed—he felt the truth of all his father ſaid; he could not deny there were friends, in whom there was no honour, and women, in whom there was no faith; all his Lordſhip contended for was, an exception in favour of *his* friends and *his* women; as that exception, however, was preciſely the one the Earl was leaſt diſpoſed to grant, the conference did not end quite cordially; but as the debts were paid, that ceaſed to be of importance.

From this time the Earl was more attentive to his ſon's mode of life; and although his heart did the fulleſt juſtice to the charms of Lady Denningcourt, he could not help acknowledging that the ſyſtem of governing children, as practiſed by his own parents, even to the joining them unſuitably in wedlock, was leſs dangerous than that he had himſelf adopted; but it was in vain he now endeavoured to repair his error, by reſuming the authority he had reſigned;—the reproaches and threats, which reſulted from his acquaintance with the prodigality of his ſon, were liberties *one gentleman* had no right to take with *another*; ſo, at leaſt, thought Lord Vallerton, and the friends he conſulted: there was, of courſe, no ſubmiſſion on one ſide; no conceſſions on the other; the ſon was again diſtreſſed, and the father iraſcible; but he

he once more paid the debts, and ſolemnly abjured the offender for ever.

It was indeed time for the Earl to be either angry or prudent; he had paid upwards of an hundred thouſand pounds for his ſon, beſides an allowance of two thouſand pounds a year; and as his perſonal property was principally that which he received with his laſt lady, and having always lived in an expenſive magnificent ſtile, he muſt elſe ſoon have been a diſtreſſed man himſelf. It happening, about this time, that the Counteſs was in an ill ſtate of health, he retired with her to his caſtle, where he gratified his reſentment againſt his ſon, by cutting down all the timber, breaking entails, and, finally, deviſing every ſhilling of property in his power to the Counteſs.

The caſtle, and a ſmall heritable eſtate, being unalienable, he new-built the jointure-houſe, and was employed in decorating and furniſhing it, purpoſing to remove every thing but the actual heir-looms from the ancient reſidence of the family, when he was ſeized with a fit of the gout, to which he was ſubject, and expired in ſix hours.

Lady Denningcourt poſſeſſed the confidence of her Lord when living, as entire as his fortune when dead; he left her wholly unreſtrained in her future conduct, except in regard to his ſon, to whom he abſolutely forbid her, as ſhe reſpected his memory, to give up any part of the property he deviſed to her, not even at her death, except he ſhould be then married, and,

by having become a father himſelf, learned how to appretiate the parental indulgence he had ſo much abuſed. His Lordſhip had alſo verbally requeſted her to make the houſe, which he had been ſo anxious to complete, her principal reſidence during her life.

The young Earl's conduct, when, after the removal of the Counteſs from the caſtle, he took poſſeſſion of that and the ſmall demeſne which devolved to him, was ill calculated to conciliate the favour of the dowager, ſince, to the ſcandal of the neighbourhood, he brought thither a miſtreſs, who, judging of her by his former connexions, might very naturally be ſuppoſed to accompany him in the obſcurity which his own ill conduct merited, in order to be "in at the death" of all his remaining property.

The old furniture and family plate were heir-looms of the caſtle; but all the modern ornaments were removed to the jointure-houſe, which Roſa was now approaching.

There was a ſublimity, as well as grandeur, in the *tout enſemble* of this elegant building, that ſtruck the beholder with admiration; and it was ſurrounded by ſuch a coincidence of objects, that it might be well ſtiled the manſion of peace. It ſtood on a gentle eminence, but did not command ſo extenſive and various a proſpect as was ſeen from every part of Delworth-houſe.

The grand entrance to the beſt apartments was by a flight of ſteps, under a colonade, ſupported by lofty marble

marble pillars; but there were in the ſuite of apartments beneath comfort and convenience that rendered them favourites with the fair miſtreſs of the manſion; the ceilings were not quite ſo lofty as the others, but the furniture and decorations equal, and the windows, all to the ground, opened to the park, from which Nature's moſt lovely carpet in front was only ſeparated by a light *chevaux de friſe*, with netting, to prevent the deer, and a few favourite lambs, from injuring the fine flowers, which, in china vaſes, were arranged in front of the houſe, intermixed with a variety of birds of beautiful ſong and plumage.

The grand eating ſaloon, a breakfaſt, a muſic, and billiard rooms, a lady's and a gentleman's library, with an elegant *boudoir* at each end, were at once viſible to the eye of the paſſengers, who were allowed to go through the park.

Roſa gazed not only at the beautiful apartments as ſhe paſſed them, but at the happy beings; for ſo ſhe thought they muſt be who inhabited them: and though good manners might rather be ſaid to be a part of her natural diſpoſition, than an acquirement from education, ſhe could not help ſtopping to indulge a ſenſation, that had ſomething more affecting in it than mere curioſity, while obſerving a lady who was reading in the *boudoir*, and who preſently left it with her book in her hand: Roſa dropped a low involuntary curtſey, though conſcious of its not being obſerved.

The lady ſtopped a moment, as ſhe paſſed the library, ſpeaking to a gentleman who was writing there, in an accent ſo mild and harmonious, as vibrated on the ear of attention, and then went on, Roſa ſlowly following, the *chevaux de friſe* only dividing her from the object of her admiration, who again ſtopped at the ſecond library, where three ladies were aſſembled, one of whom was tuning her harp, a ſecond drawing, and the third netting.

The lady again ſtopped, and entered into a ſhort converſation with the group, whoſe ſmiling countenances announced the eaſe of their hearts; while Roſa, fearful of giving offence, paſſed ſlowly on.

Deeply ſighing as ſhe proceeded, every new object adding to her admiration; "Oh!" cried ſhe, "had Heaven ordained ſuch an aſylum for me! all here muſt be purity and benevolence; for here dwelt the reſpectable foundreſs of thoſe monuments of charity now full in her view, as explained by Lady Gauntlet.

The lady, who had left her friends, and proceeded with a quickened pace toward the further *boudoir*, again ſtopped, and the ſilver tones of her ſtill harmonious, but more dulcet voice, was addreſſed to thoſe within; ſhe ſeemed to ſooth—ſhe ſtrove to comfort; her efforts, not ſucceeding, became more faint—ſhe turned, weeping, from the *boudoir* into an orangery, which adjoined it.

"Alas!" cried Roſa, "how impoſſible is it to judge of this ſtrange world! here, in the boſom of tranquillity,

tranquillity, the tear of anguish is seen to flow—even that interesting woman is not exempt from sorrow!"

Coming now to the front of the *boudoir*, she beheld a female figure, apparently young, reclining her head on a pillow, which an elderly woman supported; a greyhound lay at her feet, and her eyes were fixed on the ground, totally inattentive to the endeavours of two women to amuse her, though they dressed a lamb in a fantastical manner with flowers, for that purpose.

What did not Rosa feel at that moment! Why did her bosom swell? why did her tears flow? she could not envy a being who, visited by sickness or misfortune, beheld the enchanting scene, that so affected her, with apathy.

Envy was a stranger to the bosom of the Beggar: a sensation of tenderness overwhelmed her. This was perhaps the daughter, the sister, the friend of the good and charitable Lady Denningcourt; for her, she persuaded herself, it was she had seen. Oh! how precious the tears of such a woman! she who administered comfort to age, who gave to sickness a bed of ease—to infancy an asylum. Oh how soothing must her sympathy be! how more than happy those to whom it was extended! even the menial domestics of Lady Denningcourt must feel the blessings of her good acts, dropping like manna from heaven! blessings, alas! which she could never hope to share.

She had now passed the house; her low spirits were accompanied by a nervous irritability; and

though it was only the greyhound that left the *boudoir*, leaped the *chevaux de friſe*, and ran after her, ſhe was frightened, and fell.

Her ſcream reached the three ladies and the gentleman, who all haſtened through a low green gate, almoſt hid by trees, to her aſſiſtance, and were, no doubt, aſtoniſhed to ſee a beautiful young woman in a *ruſty black* riding habit, almoſt ſenſeleſs on the ground, with the greyhound jumping on her, and licking her hands and face.

"Dido, Dido, here, here, Dido," cried a female voice.

Roſa ſtarted up—ſhe was ſeized with a nervous affection; ſhe ſhrieked, wept, careſſed the dog, and preſſed him to her heart.

"Dido, Dido," again cried the woman. "Dido, Dido," was repeated in a weaker voice.

Roſa ſhrieked; the perſons calling Dido approached; but Dido's name no longer reverberated from the abode of tranquillity, nor was it the alternate ſcreams and ſobs of Roſa only that were now heard.

The young perſon, at whoſe feet the greyhound lay, had, with one of her attendants, anxiouſly purſued him. The creature was infinitely dear to her—ſhe followed it; and the moment ſhe ſaw Roſa, her ſhrieks rent the air.

The gentleman was alarmed—the ladies terrified; at length changing ſhrieks to deep and hollow groans, "Roſa! *my* Roſa! *my* dear own, own Roſa, ah! how

how I have longed for this!" ſounded from her bloodleſs lips; and our heroine found the emaciated form of the once happy and ever dear Elinor in her arms.

"The goodneſs of Goodneſs have mercy upon me," cried her attendant, the loquacious Mrs. Betty Brown, "if here be'nt my Miſs fainted quite away, and the loſt ſheep found! How do you do, Miſtreſs Roſa? what, don't you know me? I think, by your parrel, you need not be very proud; for my part, I ſhould be aſhamed to appear in our ſtuart's room in ſuch a ſhabby genteel dreſs."

The Duke of Athelane, whom Roſa ſaw in the library, ſent another of Elinor's women for a gentleman of the Faculty, who, with a very liberal ſalary, was retained in the houſe: he removed Elinor to the *boudoir*; and as he inſiſted on every perſon's retiring, an elderly woman, who, under his directions, conſtantly watched her, excepted, the Duke invited Roſa into the room the ladies had left.

Had every being Roſa ever knew, not excepting Mr. Montreville, been preſent, ſhe would have had neither eyes, ears, nor a thought to beſtow on any but Elinor: ſhe entreated, in the moſt earneſt and paſſionate terms, permiſſion to attend her dear friend, her companion, the ſiſter of her heart.

"You hear, Me'm," ſaid one of the ladies, "the Doctor interdicts all company."

"The Doctor," replied Roſa, her eyes bathed in tears, "knows not how dear we are to each other. My poor Elinor! her mind, I know, is not changed with her perſon."

"That is, indeed, changed," ſaid the Duke, in an accent of pity.

"I think, Me'm," ſaid the ſame lady, "we have ſeen you before?"

Roſa now looked round; and, to her unſpeakable aſtoniſhment, beheld Lady Hopely and the two ladies ſhe chaproned at Mrs. Woudbe's maſked-ball, whoſe recollection of her were far leſs favourable than her's of them; but though the ſatirical glance of Miſs Bruce, as ſhe ſpoke, might, in other circumſtances, have confounded Roſa, ſhe was at this moment ſo much intereſted, and ſo anxious to obtain permiſſion to ſee Elinor, that, forgetting the coldneſs of the amiable Counteſs, to whom ſhe was ſo much obliged the laſt and only time ſhe had ſeen her in London, and remembering only her kindneſs at Edinburgh, ſhe inſtantly addreſſed her, imploring her to obtain, from the friends of the poor invalid, permiſſion for her to be admitted to her.

Lady Hopely was moved by her tears; but the peculiar circumſtance under which ſhe had firſt known her, and the ſuſpicious ones in which they had ſince met, as well as the delicate ſituation of the young lady, repelled her natural wiſh to diſpenſe happineſs; ſhe

was

was therefore ſilent, and Miſs Bruce returned to the attack.

"You don't ſay, Me'm, whether I am miſtaken; I think you live with that amiable woman, Mrs. Woudbe?"

Roſa bowed.

"Yes, I think you was her double at the maſked-ball. Upon my honour, I thought you had great merit there;—it was a poſt of ſome danger, as well as fatigue."

A wedding, a preſentation, a new faſhion, and an elopement, are ſubjects that intereſt moſt young women of faſhion. Miſs Angus, as lively as Miſs Bruce, and far more good-natured, could not help joining the converſation.

"You are going, we hear, to have a grand wedding at Delworth?"

Roſa, who had been ſeated by the Duke, again bowed.

"A ball *al freſco*?" continued Miſs Angus.

"Oh, yes!" rejoined Miſs Bruce—"quite a famous thing! you will have a great number of viſitants in *maſks*, I fancy;—you are not much fatigued with bare faces in this country."

"I wonder," ſaid Miſs Angus, "how that model of every thing extraordinary, Lady Gauntlet, can exiſt in ſuch a ſolitude?"

"You, Me'm," cried Miſs Bruce, with a broad ſtare from her dull, inſipid eye, "are, however,

amuſed vaſtly well, I dare ſay;—Lord Delworth is very gallant, and the Major quite the thing."

"So fully and ſo well employed," joined Lady Hopely, riſing, "you would have very little time to ſpare for our poor invalid, notwithſtanding ſhe was, as we underſtand, your ſchool companion."

Her Ladyſhip immediately quitted the apartment as ſhe uttered the laſt word, followed by the Duke.

"Pray, Me'm," and Miſs Bruce politely turned her back as ſhe ſpoke, "where was it you had the good fortune to be ſchoolmate with Miſs Athelane?"

"Miſs Athelane!" repeated Roſa. But the letter ſhe had received from Elinor immediately recurring to her memory, and with it the ſeveral circumſtances of her removal from Doctor Croak's, ſhe concluded that either Lady Denningcourt, or one of her friends, was the relation under whoſe protection Elinor now was; ſhe alſo, in that inſtant, remembered the particular injunction of her friend, not to let the name of Buhanun eſcape her; and fear, leſt Lady Hopely might mention her connection with the Major's family, blunted every ſhaft from the malignity of Miſs Bruce, to whoſe mercy ſhe was now left, as Miſs Angus was ſent for by the Duke.

"What are you ſurpriſed at?" continued Miſs Bruce; "but perhaps you did not know her by the name of Athelane? I ſuppoſe—" and ſhe eyed the ruſty black habit with as ſcrutinizing a glance as Betty herſelf could have done—"I ſuppoſe either your

friend has riſen, or you fallen very conſiderably, ſince you were ſchool companions;—but I ſhould like to know what fine ſeminary qualified you for a place in Mrs. Woudbe's family arrangements?"

Miſs Bruce had as good a diſpoſition to abuſe Miſs Athelane, as to mortify our heroine;—perhaps, indeed, had ſhe not been reſtrained by certain private conſiderations, the former might have predominated, ſince, in her, a new rival had ſtarted out of the lap of myſtery, more dangerous than ſhe once thought Kattie Buhanun, as the Duke made no ſecret of his wiſh to unite his nephew, Mr. Angus, to this new-found favourite, whereas the latter could not have provoked her malignant ſatire by any thing but her extraordinary beauty.

Roſa bluſhed deeply; ſhe had, in the recent diſcovery of Mrs. Woudbe's character, a ſolution of the diſeſteem in which that intriguing matron was held; and the proof that Lady Gauntlet was privy to her abandoned conduct, alſo ſuggeſted that the dearth of company at Delworth, and of private viſiters in Portman-ſquare, reſulted from the ſame cauſe.

But, beſides that, ſhe was in the moment racking her invention for means to prevent Lady Hopely from communicating circumſtances poor Elinor had been ſo anxious to conceal; there was the appearance of ſuch ſapience of underſtanding blended with the ſpiteful and unprovoked ill-humour of Miſs Bruce, that, conſidering "the blindneſs of the underſtanding as much

to

to be pitied as the blindneſs of the eye, that there is neither jeſt nor guilt in the perſon who loſes their way in either," ſhe rather felt ſorry for, than angry at her attacks.

But as ſhe was as little diſpoſed to vindicate as to expoſe Mrs. Woudbe, it was as difficult to anſwer the broad hints againſt her, without doing one or the other, as at all to juſtify herſelf; ſhe therefore ſimply anſwered, that her acquaintance commenced with the young lady ſhe had ſo accidentally met, at a boarding-ſchool in the country, kept by one of the beſt of women; whoſe——"

"What, Harley!" interrupted Miſs Bruce, "or ſome ſuch name? ſhe who is always teaſing us with letters, and who, indeed, appears to me to be as mad as her pupil."

"Mad!" repeated Roſa, with emotion; "I hope, Madam, I have no marks of inſanity?"

"You! no, no; and yet, now I recollect, what the deuce did you mean by hugging the old grey-hound?—the odious thing is quite a nuiſance; and I have often wondered Lady Denningcourt would humour her niece by keeping it—it has really hardly ſtrength to crawl;—nothing can be a ſtronger proof of the derangement of her little ſenſes than fondneſs for ſuch an animal."

"Ah, Madam!" cried Roſa, with pale and breathleſs anxiety, "what do you ſay? Deranged! has ſuch a calamity befallen my dear Elinor?"

"It

"It certainly has," replied the unfeeling Miſs Bruce, and ſhrugging her ſhoulders; "yet, notwithſtanding that, we want to make a Ducheſs of her—but it won't do; the girl is well enough; they cry up her innocence, ſweet temper, and all that—but it won't do; there are people in the world on whom poliſhed metal, of inferior value, will paſs better than rough gold, and Angus is one of them;—beſides, to ſuppoſe ſuch a charming fellow as that will ever marry a maniac, is a famous joke, even if he were weary of the forward bold thing he keeps."

Miſs Bruce always ſpoke before ſhe began thinking; and no young lady from the North of Tweed could ſay more nothings in a given time than herſelf.

The ſubject ſhe had now entered on was an everlaſting one; it was Mr. Angus and the Dukedom.

Roſa eagerly liſtened: ſhe no longer thought of reſtraining Lady Hopely's communications.

The part of Miſs Bruce's converſation which ſhe comprehended, was intereſting in the higheſt degree. Miſs Bruce was proceeding, when ſhe alſo was ſent for; and the ſervant had but juſt cloſed one door after her, before Mrs. Brown entered at another.

Roſa aroſe with alacrity; ſhe now ſaw before her the perſon, whoſe care and profeſſions of kindneſs had left a laſting impreſſion on her heart, and to whom ſhe had given credit for integrity and good meanings enough to excuſe the weakneſs and often folly of her conduct; her white arms were expanded ready to encircle

circle the neck on which, in childhood, ſhe had often hung; but the heart that never ſhared in her careſſes, further than intereſt led, was now abſent, from the ſame motives.

"How do you do, Mrs. Roſa?" ſaid ſhe, with an air of the moſt ſettled compoſure, and ſeating herſelf, nodded to a chair.

Roſa firſt ſtared in aſtoniſhment, and then, notwithſtanding the aching ſolicitude ſhe felt for Elinor, could not help laughing at the ſtate of the expecting my Lady Ducheſs's woman.

"I am glad to ſee you ſo merry, Mrs. Roſa," ſaid Betty; "your dreſs is ſo ſhabby (and ſhe drew a pink belt, which faſtened her fine muſlin gown, tighter), that really I thought what was bred in the bone, would never get out of the fleſh;—to be ſure, aſhes to aſhes, and dirt to dirt, all the world over; but then, as you have had ſuch good larning, why a body ſhould think as you mought get a liven; for, as I told you in my letter, when land and money is gone and ſpent, then larning is moſt excellent;—but, howſever, as I ſay, every body is not born with ſilver ſpoons in their mouths; and though I wiſit at Lord Gauntlet's, I am ſure the leaſt of my thoughts was to find you there along with that lady, as Mrs. Modely, and ſhe is our ſtuart's couſin, ſes isn't a Lady born; though ſhe do give grand balls, where owr young ladies went when we was in London——"

"Betty, my dear Betty," interrupted Roſa—

"Mrs.

"Mrs. Brown, if you pleaſe, Mrs. Roſa; and I aſſure you, every body uſed to call me ſo when I kept a houſe of my own, only that poor ingorant man, my huſbent, would always let you call me Betty; becauſe, poor ſappy Tony, he ſaid, as we was no better nor wus then ſarvants to his maſter; but the caſe is quite altered, for now I never wets my fingers; and pleaſe God, I ſhall have good fortune; for a Gipſey——"

"Dear Mrs. Brown, do anſwer me," ſaid Roſa; "I don't aſk if Lady Denningcourt be the lady who took my Elinor from Doctor Croak's—that I underſtand; but only tell me how long ſhe has been ill, and what is her malady?"

"Oh Lord, Miſs!—Mrs. Roſa I mean," and Betty having carefully examined whether there were any liſteners near the key-hole of the doors, ſhut them—"have not you heard? why ſhe is mad!"

"Oh, God in his mercy forbid!" and Roſa's pale cheeks accorded with the exclamation.

"True as you are alive, Miſs—Mrs. Roſa—as mad as a March hare;—and here we have got a mad doctor and a mad nuſs. Poor dear! ſhe is ſo glad when the old woman, juſt for a moment, leaves her and me together!"

"Oh, dear girl! I can divine the fatal cauſe."

"Not you indeed, Mrs. Roſa—not if you had ſeven years, and ſeven to that: I am ſure I never inſpected

ſpected it myſelf; and ſo I told his Grace, upon my bended knees, when he found it out."

"And what did his Grace find out?"

"Why, Miſs, he found out as that ragamuffin feller, Jack Croak, got our ſtuart, a very well-ſpoken portly man as he is, to hire him for a footman; and at laſt, I knowed no more of it than the man in the moon, he got Miſs Elinor away in a poſt-chaiſe; and, by God's marcy, the Duke had been to his caſtle in Scotland—a fine place our ſtuart ſays it is; and as he was coming back to my Lady, who ſhould he meet but Jack Croak and Miſs;—well, I never ſhall forget it the longeſt day I have to live, when I went to get her up in the morning; there was the neſt, but the bird was flown—and I trembled like a naſpen leaf when I went to tell my Lady;—and Oh, dear, dear, what a houſe we had! My Lady did nothen but wring her hands, and ſay her prayers. Ah, Miſs—Mrs. I ſhould ſay—you may well cry; for, to be ſure, my ſuffrens was great—I expected every minute to be turned out of doors."

Though Betty had not betrayed the ſmalleſt mark of ſenſibility at meeting with Roſa, ſhe did not want ſympathy in certain caſes.

Roſa wept for Elinor—Betty for herſelf.

"Ah!" cried Roſa, "I foreboded."

"You mean, Mrs. Roſa, you afterboded it, I ſuppoſe, and after-wits is poor ſtuff; for I defy Satan himſelf to have inſpected ſuch a thing, as Jack Croak's being

being at our houſe, one of our footmen, and me not find him out;—though, indeed, except our own footman in the ſtuart's-room, we ladies' women never ſpeak to them inferior ſarvants, much leſs to inſpect as Miſs Elinor would go for to make a napkin of a duſter;—and then, as our butler ſaid, when I told him as Jack ſtole money from his father's ſarvant, 'Why,' ſays he, 'tis a wonder I have got all my plate;'—and ſo it was, Miſs—don't you think ſo?"

"Not exactly; but pray go on:—the Duke met them, you ſay, and knew——"

"He knew Miſs Elinor at firſt glance, juſt as they paſſed the gate at that place where the ſmith lives as marries all the folks; but then, that fool Jack might have got away as eaſy as a glove, and his Grace would have known nothen about him; but there he hung to the wheels of the carriage, and cried; and when the groom dragged him away, throwed himſelf on the ground,—and then Mr. Maclane, the Duke's gentleman, remembered him."

"Poor fellow!"

"Lord, Miſtreſs Roſa! how can you pity ſuch a ſcapegrace, as had like to turn me out of my place! I am ſure hanging is too good for him. Howſever, back they brought poor Miſs Elinor, more like a ghoſt nor a Chriſtian; and my Lady, ſtead of flying out as Madam Bawſky would have done, was as meek as a lamb; and, ſtead of ſcolding, axed Miſs Elinor's

Elinor's pardon for letting her live ſo long with Dr. Croak."

"Amiable, reſpectable Lady Denningcourt!"

"You may well ſay that, Miſtreſs Roſa; for God knows ſhe is fit for nothen but the kingdom of heaven;—high and low, rich and poor—'tis all one; every body loves her, and ſhe can't ſhew her noſe in the village, but what folk are ready to throw her down with bleſſings; but, howſever, to make ſhort of the ſtory, Jack was ſent—I don't know where he was ſent; but if ever he comes here again, I believe old Croak will pay off all ſcores. Lord, Miſtreſs Roſa, only think what long ſcores I got owed to me at Penry—a poor, mean place, now—would you believe?"

"But how did Elinor bear——"

"Bear! why I told you before, ſhe could not bear—ſhe run mad:—firſt, ſhe neither eat nor drank, and then ſhe never ſpoke, and at laſt ſhe ſtared and ſtormed; I was afraid to go near her. My Lady took her to London, and then to the great doctor that cures every body; and they all wanted her to let Miſs ſtop with them;—and that would have been a ſad thing, for then, you know, Miſs, I muſt have loſt my place; but my Lady ſaid, No, ſhe would never part with her."

"Oh Mrs. Brown! what would I not give to be as happy as you!"

"Why,

"Why, to be ſure, Miſs, I wants for nothing;—and if I could but hear for ſartain that poor John Brown was laid in his peaceful grave, why (and Mrs. Brown bridled) I might be very comfortable; for our ſtuart is worth a power of money, and he——"

"Heavens, Betty, what are you ſaying? Have you loſt both your ſenſes and your principles?"

"Lord, Miſtreſs Roſa! no—I tell you it is poor Miſs Elinor who have loſt her ſenſes. So then, you ſee, when my Lady found as all the doctors could do, only cured her of her obſtropleſſneſs, and left her as moping and mollancholly as a cat, ſhe hired a doctor and a nuſs—a poor, fat, lazy, old creature as ever lived—to come down here; but, poor ſole, ſhe is fell away to a ſkeleton; and now, after poor Dido——you remember old Dido, Miſs Roſy?"

Mrs. Brown was now imperceptibly changing the Miſtreſs Roſa to Miſs Roſy.

"Remember her! yes, my dear Betty;—now you call me Roſy, I may again call you Betty; and I remember Mr. John Brown, good John Brown, your huſband—he is worth a thouſand ſtewards;—ſure you would be glad to ſee him?"

"Not I, Miſs Roſy—not I, I aſſure you; for, poor man, you know Miſs, he is certainly dead, and I don't want no acquaintance with any body after they are corpuſſes; beſides, our ſtuart——But pray, Miſs, how camed you to leave that Major's Lady? I ſuppoſe you was too ſtomachful to wait on her after the

the gentleman died; but that was all frippery nonſenſe; for, you ſee, though I kept a houſe of my own ——Oh, geminigig! there's my bell, and I muſt run. Howſever, Miſtreſs Roſa, if you paſs this way again, and come round to tother front, ring the ſtuart's bell, and aſk for me—for Mrs. Brown—and you will be made as welcome as flowers in May. Oh Lord, there's the bell again!"

"Betty, Betty, ſtay one moment;—can't I ſee Elinor?"

"Oh dear! I don't know—there's the bell again—and that old nuſs owes me a grudge—I muſt be gone;" and away ran Mrs. Brown.

Roſa was again alone—her heart now palpitating with hope ſhe would be allowed to ſee the dear afflicted girl, for whom ſhe had ſo ſincere and ardent an affection, and now ſinking with fear at ſhe knew not what, beſides the poſſibility that ſhe might be baniſhed this terreſtrial Eden, and never more behold her Elinor. It was full half an hour before ſhe heard a foot ſtir; at length the door was thrown open by a ſervant, and the Duke of Athelane entered.

CHAP. VI.

" At length Sancho ſaid to his maſter, Pleaſe, Sir, to aſk Mr. Ape, whether the affair of the cave be true? for, begging your Worſhip's pardon, I don't believe a word of it.

" The monkey being accordingly conſulted, the anſwer was, that *part* was *true*, and *part falſe*."

THE Duke of Athelane was neither young nor handſome; but he was, what is ſuperior to either, ſenſible and well-informed: his air was grand, his countenance open, and his demeanour courteous; he was not aſhamed of being a ſlave to honour, though he had power to ſeal the lip of cenſure, and though, independent in his ſpirit and fortune, he had not learned, by a contempt of fame, to deſpiſe virtue. He united the two oppoſite characters of courtier and patriot in a manner that ſecured the reſpect of the Sovereign, and the love of the people; men of ſenſe were proud to quote his opinion—men of honour to follow his example.

He ſucceeded his brother to the Ducal honours and eſtate, in default of male iſſue; and never having been married, had, by agreement between the late Duke and himſelf, at a great expence, both of money and intereſt, procured a grant from the Crown for the title to paſs, with the eſtate, to Mr. Angus, ſon of his ſiſter,

ſiſter, the only male deſcendant of the elder branch of the ancient family of the Athelanes.

Lady Denningcourt was endeared to him by her beauty, her virtues, and her early and almoſt unprecedented misfortunes; and it may be no digreſſion here to acknowledge, that Elinor's ſurmiſe was juſt: it was by a maternal right ſhe was claimed from Doctor Croak.

Lady Elinor Athelane was the eſſence of harmony in body and ſoul: her brother inherited from his race all the indignant ſenſe of honour which diſtinguiſhed the brave Scotch chieftains, when, impatient of delay, they ſeized the power of avenging their own wrong, without waiting the tardy execution of the law.—"Noble he was, and noble were his ſires:" he was the pride of his country, the honour of his family, and the champion of the injured wherever he met them—a terrible foe, a faithful and unwearied friend. My ſon, ſaid his father, in delivering his own ſentiments, thinks ſo or ſo; my ſon, ſaid the fond exulting mother, acts thus, or thus; my brother, ſaid the dove-like ſiſter—Oh! if ever I love, it muſt be a man like my brother.

And ſuch a man there was.

A youth of her mother's clan was the choſen companion of the Marquis of Dungaron: their ſpirits were congenial, their forms eminently fine, their features handſome, and their manners naturally elegant; their taſtes, purſuits, and amuſements were the ſame; till the

the power which conquers all, broke the ſweet bond of amity, and blaſted every bud of hope.

Lady Elinor, who, with her mother, had reſided ſhe laſt three years in the South, for the benefit of maſters ſuperior to thoſe to be procured in the North, at one glance decided the deſtiny of the two friends.—Unconſcious of the fatal conſequences of that paſſion which, even according to holy writ, "is as ſtrong as death, which many waters cannot quench, nor floods drown," indulging the ſweet bent of her gentle diſpoſition to confer happineſs, ſhe thought not of the precipice on which ſhe ſtood, nor doubted the honour of him whoſe ſoul was dear as her own.

The youth had no inheritance but the ſword of his anceſtors, unſtained by an act of diſhonour: Lady Elinor's fortune would be immenſe; and ſhe was betrothed by her father to an Engliſh Peer of the firſt rank. Poor Elinor! this was a fatal bar to her lover's hope, of which ſhe never thought, while the graceful youth knelt at her feet, impreſſed burning kiſſes on her hand, and waſhed them with his tears, till the Duke tore the fond bandage from their eyes, by informing them of what Reaſon, had they not been too much in love to attend to her dictates, might have told them long before, that, however congenial their minds, acres of land and thouſands of guineas formed an impaſſable bar to obſtruct their union.

The lover's genius was high, his ſoul daring, and his love unconquerable; but he was poor, and could

not dare aſk one of the firſt and richeſt Dukes in Scotland to forego his promiſe, and break his ſacred word in favour of an indigent relation.

Elinor, who was as mild as diffident, and as dutiful as fond, fainted away when the Duke ſpoke of the honourable alliance he had formed for her: he attributed her emotion to the exceſſive delicacy of her mind, and was too much ſatisfied with the treaty to obſerve its effect on the companion of his ſon. The future ſettlement of the young pair had brought on an intimacy between the Marquis and the daughter of the ſame family; he alſo became paſſionately enamoured; his parents approved; his heart bounded with tranſport; and his impatience to haſten the two-fold nuptials could be only equalled by the torturing anxiety of the fair Elinor to avoid it.

The young man, who could not conceal, and who dared not avow, his paſſion, prevailed on his father to command his abſence from Athelane for a ſhort time. This was acceded to with reluctance, and he ſet off, not to enter his paternal home, but to hide in the caverns on the Athelane eſtate, which had formerly received bands of warriors, there to watch the footſteps of the wretched Elinor, to woo her to his retreats, to aſſail her with all the tenderneſs of a firſt paſſion, and all the frenzy of deep deſpair.

The Engliſh lover at length viſited Athelane: he was received with hoſpitable ſplendour; he ſat at the right-hand of the Ducheſs, and was attended to with the

the niceſt reſpect by the Duke, and the moſt friendly warmth by the Marquis; but the lovely daughter, pale, and cold as marble, partook neither of the joy of her friends, nor the rapture of her admirer.

Lord Cheltenham felt all the deſire, but none of the ſenſibilities, of true love; he was handſome and accompliſhed, nor was he by any means inſenſible of his own merit; he could not believe the cold reception he received from Lady Elinor was, as the Ducheſs hinted, the mere effect of delicacy, and became firſt ſuſpicious, then watchful. Lady Elinor was neither; her ſecret interviews with the beloved couſin were therefore ſoon betrayed.

Lord Cheltenham's wounded pride and diſappointed paſſion, were not to be appeaſed with any thing leſs than expoſure of the woman who could prefer an indigent relation to a coronet; he led the noble open-hearted Dungaron to a cavern, the entrance to which was ſhaded by thick underwood, and blaſted every youthful hope by coldly and ſcornfully pointing to Lady Elinor enjoying that repoſe in her lover's arms, which ſhe courted in vain on her pillow.

"For this," ſaid Lord Cheltenham, "was I invited to Athelane? and was I, but for this fortunate diſcovery, deſtined to marry a wanton? But think not, my Lord Marquis, Lady Altmeria Cheltenham will ally herſelf to diſhonour—here muſt our family treaty end—patch up the affair as you pleaſe

—except to my ſiſter, the diſgrace ſhall reſt with me."

There needed not the goad of diſappointed love to urge the Marquis of Dungaron's rage at a ſight ſo appalling to honour and friendſhip; the ſiſter he adored, the friend he loved, confederates in the diſhonour of his name, and the ruin of his peace!

"Wretch! villain!" he cried, flying on them like an hungry lion on his prey; and twiſting his ruthleſs hand in the golden treſſes of the gentle, terrified Lady Elinor, he dragged her from the encircling arms of his once favoured friend.

"She is my wife, my Lord!" ſaid he.

"Die, traitor! hypocrite! and, with the baſe lie in thy throat, face the God of truth!"

The Marquis had now ſeized on the unarmed youth with one hand, and drew his dirk with the other.

The frantic Elinor ruſhed before its point. "Ah, my brother!" ſaid ſhe, tears ſtreaming from her mild eyes, "what would you do? will Athelane's heir become an aſſaſſin!"

The furious Marquis ſpurned her from him; and glancing in that fatal moment his furious eyes round the cavern, ſaw a pair of piſtols lying on a projecting ſtone, brought there by the unhappy lover.

The Marquis ſeized them with implacable rage. "Coward! ſcoundrel! lurking mean villain!" What was it of raging paſſion he did not utter!

Lady

Lady Elinor again knelt at his feet; again he ſpurned her.

"If," cried the Marquis, foaming with rage, and offering one of the piſtols, "thou dareſt face thy injured friend, and ill-requited benefactor——"

"Oh, for mercy! my brother, my dear brother!" and Lady Elinor once more proſtrated herſelf.

In his attempt to raiſe her, the lover accidentally fell himſelf; and in that ſituation received a perſonal inſult too degrading for manhood. Forbearance was no more—the piſtol was accepted, and diſcharged—the combatants both fell, and Elinor's ſhrieks rent the air.

The woodmen heard her—the family were alarmed—the Duke and Ducheſs flew to the ſpot. Unhappy parents! their pride, their hope, their only ſon, was expiring; he could only articulate enough to charge himſelf with all the blame of the fatal deed, before he breathed his laſt on the boſom that gave him birth. The bleeding body of his opponent was not ſuffered to enter the caſtle; it was carried to a neighbouring cottage, where his father, to whoſe more humble heart he was not leſs dear than the Marquis of Dungaron to his, arrived the ſame evening; and being conſidered as an acceſſary with his ſon, was obliged to accept the aſſiſtance of the friends of his own clan, to eſcape by ſea the revenge vowed againſt him by the more powerful clan of Athelane; and in a fiſhing-veſſel, brought as near as the coaſt would admit, he, with

two faithful adherents, reached the coaſt of France, carrying with him his wounded and almoſt lifeleſs ſon.

The Ducheſs never ſpoke after her ſon expired; and the Duke, unable to ſupport himſelf under ſuch a double calamity, was reduced to the laſt extremity. The coffins of his adored wife and beloved ſon were, by his order, though ſoldered up, kept in ſtate to wait for his own; and the caſtle reſembled more a receptacle for the dead, than the ſeat of magnificent hoſpitality.

In the general wreck, Elinor, the gentle, tender, delicate Elinor, only retained fortitude and ſtrength to watch every turn in the Duke's diſorder; but the price of his pardon was an oath never to behold the murderer of a mother, whoſe virtue adorned her high rank—of a ſon, who was the hope of his country.

Life would have been a poor ſacrifice, in the dutiful Elinor's eſtimation, to procure the pardon and peace of her now only parent; but a tie more dear than life bound her to the wretched exile.

According to the laws of Scotland, which do not require a church ceremony to validate a marriage, or legitimate the offspring of an acknowledged union, Lady Elinor was, in her own eſtimation, a wife, and knew ſhe would alſo be a mother.

She proſtrated herſelf before her father, and hiding her face, made the avowal, which had nearly been as fatal to him, as his ſon's death to her mother.

Some

Some eſtates, and great perſonals, were veſted in Lady Elinor and her iſſue, on the demiſe of the Marquis without heir; and the idea that the deſtroyer of his ſon, or any of his race, ſhould benefit by the calamity he had cauſed, threw him into agonies, in which it was feared he would expire. He became delirious, heaping curſes on his lovely daughter, and calling down the vengeance of Heaven on the murderer of his ſon.

Such was the miſerable ſtate of the Athelane family, when news, on unqueſtionable authority, was brought to the caſtle that the unfortunate offender had ſwallowed poiſon.

Groaning under the heavy weight of a father's curſe, which ſhe could not deprecate without ſtaining her ſoul with deeper guilt, without abjuring a huſband more unfortunate than criminal, and depriving the unborn of its native rights; the unburied body of her dear loved mother, brought, broken-hearted, to an untimely end; the handſome, noble Malcolm, ever mourned, and ever before her; every feeling of her ſoul lacerated with hopeleſs grief, Lady Elinor was the leſs ſhocked at the deplorable end of him who was the cauſe of all, as it removed the grand obſtacle to her father's retracting his malediction. She could dare to ruſh into his preſence, preſs his burning hand to her trembling lips, waſh it with tears of penitence, and call Heaven, and all the hoſt of angels, to witneſs the unlimited obedience ſhe would in future pay her

dear father, if Heaven, in compaſſion to her miſeries, would ſpare him to bleſs and protect her.

Her piety, her penitence, and prayers were accepted. The Duke lived to bleſs and forgive her; he led her in ſad proceſſion to attend his noble wife and ſon, when carried in funeral pomp to the mauſoleum of his anceſtors, and there heard her vow of unlimited obedience repeated, amid the ſighs and tears of all the Houſe of Athelane.

After the laſt obſequies, he immediately left his caſtle; and determining the child, of which his daughter was pregnant, ſhould, from its birth, be an alien to his family, country, and fortune, ſet off, by eaſy ſtages, to England, from whence he intimated his intention to go abroad.

Mrs. Moggy M'Laurin, the perſon who attended the late Ducheſs during her confinements, both as nurſe and midwife, was his only confident in the affair he had ſo much at heart; the bond on her ſecrecy was her attachment to his family, the reward of it an annuity for life; and having been ſent privately to the ſouth ſome days before he left Athelane, ſhe had already ſucceeded in her miſſion, which was to take a ready-furniſhed houſe, within a certain diſtance of London, and hire two Engliſh female domeſtics, ready to receive Lady Elinor before they reached the metropolis.

So far Mrs. Moggy M'Laurin was in the Duke's ſecret. She met him at Hatfield, whence, leaving his carriages

carriages and attendants to proceed to London, a hack chaiſe carried them acroſs the country, to a ſmall, lone houſe within three miles of Penry, where he reminded his daughter of her vow of obedience, and informed her ſhe was to remain there till able to leave England.

Lady Elinor underſtood the cruel policy, which was intended to rob her child of its birth-right; but always gentle and complying, as it was her nature to be, ſhe was now too timid and broken-ſpirited even to remonſtrate; ſhe knew her father's humanity, his pride, and generoſity; he could not, conſiſtent with either, abandon his own blood; and depending on a return of the fond indulgence, which was now rather ſuſpended than loſt, ſhe acquieſced, in hope that time, when it reſtored her father to himſelf, would alſo reunite her to her child; and when told that the favoured attendant of her dear mother was to be her's, ſhe gratefully kiſſed the hand of her father, not without a ſecret hope that her child would alſo be committed to the ſame care.

With this good woman Lady Elinor might indulge in all the luxury of grief, free from the keen inquiſition and reproachful glances of an offended and grieving parent, whoſe deep-drawn ſighs ſtruck in daggers to her heart; with her ſhe might dare to blend grief for a huſband, with lamentation for a mother and brother; and by her ſhe was encouraged to hope, that her child would one day be the acknowledged heir of

the Duke of Athelane; for Mrs. Moggy M'Laurin proteſted the marriage was good, and of courſe the offspring legitimate.

The Duke's viſits were frequent and ſhort, but always *incog.*; and as they were conſidered as a private family, they excited no curioſity in the neighbourhood.

The hatred borne by the Duke to the name of him, from whom his ſon received his death-wound, was ſo far from being appeaſed by his ſelf-deſtruction, that it ſwelled into irritation and revengeful ire at the moſt diſtant probability of the fortune of his houſe deſcending to any of the deteſted race; and his unborn grandchild was, of courſe, abjured before its birth.

His ſcheme was to place it out of the knowledge of any part of his family, but where the handſome allowance he intended to make for it, ſhould ſecure both juſtice and humanity. He had not yet met with any perſon in whom he choſe to place a confidence which accorded with the dictates of his conſcience, when, as Lady Elinor's time grew near, Mrs. Moggy M'Laurin ſuggeſted the neceſſity of having an *accoucheur* ready to aſſiſt her in caſe of danger.

The Duke, after many oblique enquiries, heard of Doctor Croak; and, reſolving that care for his daughter ſhould not impede the grand point, rode through Penry, where, under pretence of a gouty complaint, he called on the Doctor, who, with his *chere amie*, Mrs. Bawſky, was taking tea with every appearance

appearance of domeſtic comfort; and it inſtantly ſtruck the Duke that this man might anſwer the double purpoſe of attending his daughter, and adopting her child; he accordingly aſked ſome few leading queſtions, gave the Doctor a guinea, and took his meaſures accordingly.

It was now neceſſary he ſhould make another half-confident. His coachman, who had been brought up in the Athelane ſtables, was obliged, in obedience to the commands of the Duke, to return to one of his early ſtations, and drive, as poſtillion, a plain hired chaiſe and hack horſes.

Doctor Croak, elated by the acquiſition of a fair boarder, ſo well inclined to forward his intereſt and welfare, was in a delightful dream of advancement in life, when the loud rapping at his gate, on which, unknown to himſelf, ſo many golden advantages depended, diſturbed him; he anſwered from his window, and, on being told a chaiſe waited to carry him to a lady in want of his aſſiſtance, he made all poſſible haſte; and having taken every uſual precaution to fence out the cold, hobbled through wind and rain to the chaiſe, into which he was no ſooner entered, than a hood was thrown over his head by a perſon whoſe manual ſtrength rendered all oppoſition vain.

The Doctor's courage oozed out at all points, and he implored mercy in an accent that proved his terror.

"Be patient, Sir," ſaid the perſon who held both the Doctor and the hood in a paſſive poſition, "no injury is intended you; you are really going to a lady, who may or may not want you;—you are the agent, but not the confident, of a ſecret that may make your fortune; you will have time to conſider of a propoſal I am authorized to make; the child, who will ſoon be brought into the world, muſt never know the authors of its being. Do you comprehend?"

"He—he—hem!—no, no, not quite—hé—he—hem—clear!—he—he—hem."

"A bank note of 500l. will be put into the hands of the perſon who relieves them of all anxiety on its account;—do you comprehend now?"

"Hem—hem!—I—I think—I preſume I do!"

"Very well, Sir;—if the child live a twelvemonth, five hundred guineas more will be remitted. You are ſure you underſtand?"

"Oh perfectly; but if I had known this before, to engage a nurſe——"

"Be ſatisfied, Sir; the perſon who employs you knew better than to truſt any thing to the taciturnity of a country doctor, or to the goſſip of a nurſe; and, Sir, be aſſured there will be obſervers on your conduct; your ſecrecy and prudence will find its reward; but ſhould you be diſpoſed to babble, or make diſcoveries, the former will be to your loſs, the latter productive only of diſappointment."

The

The Doctor was ſilent; he was already reaping a golden harveſt from the night's adventure—Five hundred pounds! and at the end of the year as much more! Oh for a nurſe, from whom a child ſo endowed might ſuck longevity!

The chaiſe rolled on as the firſt five hundred was laying out to the beſt advantage. Beſides the deſirables it would purchaſe, he would, no doubt, obtain ſome great friends by the tranſaction, whom, if he once could diſcover them, which, notwithſtanding the injunctions to the contrary, he reſolved at leaſt to attempt, muſt purchaſe his ſilence. Loſt in theſe agreeable reveries, he forgot to note the time which paſſed before the carriage ſtopped, though that was ſo material a point in the diſcovery he projected.

The firſt entrance into the houſe a little damped his idea of the conſequence of his employers; he could perceive, notwithſtanding the hood, it was ſmall; the ſtaircaſe too narrow for the accommodation of a grand family; and the room into which he was led, when permitted to ſee, was furniſhed in ſo plain and undiſtinguiſhed a manner, it was as impoſſible for him to note a ſingle article, as it was unlikely people of any diſtinction inhabited it.

The groans from an inner room directed his attention thither; they became more loud and frequent. The maſked perſon who accompanied him from Penry remained with him, trembling, and walking about in the utmoſt agitation; ſeveral times he turned

from

from the Doctor to unmask and wipe the perspiration from his face.

"I am certain," said the Doctor, who really was skilful in that branch of the profession, "the lady wants my assistance;" and in that instant Mrs. Moggy M'Laurin entered to require it.

The masked person, alarmed beyond measure, burst into tears. "Save! Oh save my child!" said he, putting a purse into the Doctor's hand, as he was hastily following the female into the inner apartment.

After two hours' torturing suspense, on the part of the mask, and dangerous agony on that of the lady, Mrs. M'Laurin entered the room with a fine female infant, which, according to the order before given her, she prepared to dress.

The mask refused even to look at it. "Should I," said he, "meet in its countenance a lineament resembling the serpent her father, how shall I restrain my rage? how conquer the desire to dash it to atoms?—And should she look like her mother, shall I not gaze on her till I forget what I have lost? Never, never will I behold the offspring of the smiling villain, whose hypocrisy dealt destruction to me and mine."

"Ah, pure bairn!" said Mrs. Moggy M'Laurin, "gude trothe an thou wert mine ain, my herte cude nae be mair fair."

"Silence!" said the Duke, sternly, "thy Scotch tongue must not be heard!"

"Trothe,

"Trothe, my gude lorde," cried the honeſt woman, "I may haud my tongue; but an I were to dee, I caunna helpe greeting;—Oh! 'tis a bonny cheel!"

During the many hours Lady Elinor paſſed with this good creature, ſhe often repeated her unhappy ſtory, and deplored the fatal conſequence of her union with her lover. As Mrs. M'Laurin knew how every inch of the Athelane eſtates were ſettled at the Duke's death, and as ſhe believed in the validity of Elinor's marriage, and the legitimacy of her child, ſhe was both ſurprized and uneaſy when, as the time of childbirth drew near, ſhe was kept in entire ignorance of the fate deſtined for the infant. Her orders were, to dreſs it the inſtant it was born, in ſuch plain things as were provided, and to have ready ſuch wrappers as would fence it from the cold air.

"Weel, weel," thought Moggy M'Laurin, "I ſal do as hes Grace oreders; but I ſal ſete my merke opon the bairn, that I may auway ken the cheel of the hooſe of Athelane." And accordingly Mrs. Moggy M'Laurin, being miſtreſs of the art of marking letters with gunpowder, and valuing herſelf on having been employed by the late Ducheſs to work the coronet on the houſehold linen, ſhe made the two initials of the father and mother's ſirname, A and B, on the child's left ſide under a coronet, while the Duke paced the apartment in the utmoſt diſorder; and while the Doctor, quite as well diſpoſed to note the event, contrived, during the few minutes he remained in the room

room after Mrs. M'Laurin, to cut a ſquare piece out of an India chintz counterpane, which lay on the bed, and hide it in his boſom.

On his return to the maſk, he received from him a bank note of fifty pounds, in addition to one hundred guineas in the purſe. The Doctor bowed to the ground; the maſk then beckoned Mrs. Moggy, who held the child wrapped, according to order, in ſwanſkin, to *fence it from cold*; he received it from her, and, with another bank note for five hundred pounds, gave it into the hands of the ſtill bowing Doctor; and then, having again put on the hood, led him carefully to the chaiſe, which ſet off full ſpeed.

The Doctor had again, from mere impatience to diſpoſe of his riches, loſt all attention to the length of the way; but his deſire, and his power to arrive at the end of his journey, were two diſtinct things; for, after driving near two hours, he was guided by the maſk into a ſecond chaiſe, which ſeemed to cut the air during another hour, when it ſtopped.

"You are now, Doctor," ſaid the maſk, "entering London."

"London! good God! he—hem! London!—what can I do—he—hem! with this infant in London! he—he—hem!"

"The world, Doctor," replied the maſk gravely, "is a country never to be known by deſcription; I have travelled through it, and have found all ſorts of accommodations are to be had for money; you have

a tolerable ſum now in your pocket; you are not to ſuppoſe that the perſons from whom you received it, had your convenience only in view, though this is perhaps the hardeſt duty they will impoſe, while you may, with certainty, reckon on advantages from them in proportion to your care of the infant, which is now your own."

He ceaſed;—the chaiſe went on, and the ſtring being looſe, the hood preſently dropped off; when the Doctor found himſelf, his charge, and ſix hundred and fifty pounds, in notes and caſh, rattling over the ſtones in the Borough without his maſked companion.

The chaiſe-driver aſked where his Honour would pleaſe to alight?

His Honour did not know; he had never before entered the metropolis in ſuch ſtile; ſo the lad, taking his own directions, drove to the Croſs Keys, Gracechurch-ſtreet, where a ſtage was that moment drawn out, which, by the information on the pannel, paſſed the houſe of his brother the farmer; and it immediately ſtruck him, that as Mrs. T. Croak was one of the beſt-tempered and beſt-diſpoſitioned women in the world, and as, although ſhe could not, at certain times, help feeling a large portion of contempt for her proud brother-in-law, yet there were alſo times when ſhe was brow-beat into an appearance of reſpect for him, ſhe was the woman in the world moſt proper to take all the trouble of the infant off his hands at an

eaſy

eaſy rate, while he laid out the profits of his bargain to the *beſt advantage*.

He therefore ſtepped out of the chaiſe into the coach, and, before he could lay the ſwanſkin wrapper with the child on the ſeat, to get at money to pay the fare, both chaiſe and lad were out of ſight. As the ſurpriſe of this incident was accompanied by the return of a guinea to ninety-nine ſhining fellows, it did not diſcompoſe the Doctor, who, with his charge, whom warmth and motion had effectually lulled, was ſet down at his brother's farm, in the ſame inſtant that a neighbouring mechanic, whoſe wife was in labour, was imploring aſſiſtance from the farmer-doctor, which he was always ready to give to his poor neighbours *gratis*.

The farmer was not at home; and as Doctor Croak had a point to carry with his ſiſter-in-law, after prevailing on her to take care of the infant till ſhe could provide a nurſe, he very readily complied with her requeſt, and followed the poor man to his wife, whom he ſafely delivered of a female child, as he had truly related to Colonel Buhanun, with whom alſo, as he had *not* related to the Colonel, or any other perſon but thoſe immediately concerned in the tranſaction, he alſo left his charge to be nurſed, at ſixteen ſhillings per month.

Mrs. T. Croak's concluſion, at the ſight of the infant, was, that her brother-in-law had made a *faux-pas*, which, it was natural to ſuppoſe, he wiſhed to conceal

conceal from Madam Bawſky; but whether right in her conjecture or not, an innocent child was to her an innocent child, belong to whom it would. Finding a ſlip of paper under its cap, with "Elinor" wrote on it, ſhe had it baptized, on the Sunday following, by that name; and it was to her care the Doctor attributed the child's healthy look when, three months after, he ordered the nurſe to bring it to the milk-houſe in Hyde-Park, at a given hour, in conſequence of a billet he received from the maſk.

Mrs. Bawſky thought proper, on this occaſion, to ſend a fine robe and cap, laced with Valenciennes' edging, for the appearance of the child; and the Doctor, not a little proud of its healthy countenance, attended himſelf to the place appointed, where Mrs. Moggy M'Laurin was in waiting for them.

The good woman, who was now returning to Scotland, as the Duke and his family were on the point of leaving Britain, both himſelf and Lady Elinor being in ill health, with great difficulty had prevailed on his Grace to allow her to ſee the infant before her departure. When the Duke found her importunities unceaſing, he wrote to the Doctor, not chuſing to entruſt the place of reſidence even to his female confident.

Mrs. Moggy M'Laurin wept over the infant, and took eſpecial care to note the mark on her ſide.

"I aſſure you, Madam," ſaid the nurſe, "'tis not dirt; I have waſhed her with ſoap and water as long as waſhing is good, and it won't ſtir:—my huſband

ſays

ſays as ſhe will be a great ſchollard, for ſhe is born with A B C on her."

"Borne! nae, nae, my gude weef, trothe it was a merke of my ain, with a leetle gun-pooder. Ah my precious bairn, hoo leeken her paupau ſhe looks! my bonny cheel! wha kens but the gude Gode may bring abooten his providence, ſae thaut aw thy mither's mickle ſiller may come tull thee."

The nurſe was a north country woman; but had ſhe not underſtood the Scotch phraſes, a purſe of ten guineas, which, unſeen by the Doctor, Mrs. M'Laurin was ordered to put into her hands, were an explanation very much to the advantage of her nurſery.

She returned home without revealing her good fortune, confident that ſhe had the honour to ſuckle the child of ſome very great perſonage; and in conſequence, immediately roſe in her demands for nurſing, from ſixteen ſhillings to one guinea a month, and alſo for dozens of all ſorts; which now, as three parts of the year were expired, as the Doctor expected the ſecond five hundred, and as he could not be certain how ſoon he might be called upon for another exhibition of the child, he thought proper to grant, as well as permiſſion for the nurſe to take her charge with her twenty miles further from London, where it ſuited her huſband's buſineſs to remove, and where ſhe continued, at the ſame ſtipend, with now and then what Mrs. Bawſky choſe to think extravagant demands for cloth-

ing,

thing, three years, when the Doctor received a letter by poſt, of which the following is a copy :—

"SIR,

"Your child, for ſuch ſhe is now conſidered, is a gentlewoman, and you will be enabled to provide for her as ſuch.—You receive incloſed a draft on Meſſrs. Adderly and Co. for one thouſand pounds, which you are to underſtand is to be appropriated to the education of your daughter ;—a fund for her future proviſion will be veſted in your hands at a proper time.

"MASK."

The draft was ſigned by a reſpectable merchant, and paid as ſoon as preſented ; on which Mrs. Bawſky thought proper to hire an additional female domeſtic, and, having given the nurſe notice of her intention, fetched home her charge.

Independent of being the Doctor's pet, Elinor was a fine little creature ; and the fondneſs of her adopted uncle and aunt increaſed out of all bounds after ſhe attained her ſixth year ; when a perſon, whoſe air and manner beſpoke his high rank and quality, ſtopped at the Doctor's door, and paid into his hands ſix thouſand pounds for the uſe of his daughter, without requeſting to ſee, or even enquiring after, her. Mrs. M'Laurin had indeed a ſecond interview with her, at the ſame place, and ſatisfied herſelf in reſpect to her marks,

marks, a few months before this desirable event happened.

The Duke carried Lady Elinor with him to Italy, where, though he endeavoured in vain to get rid of the corroding anguish of his own deep regret, he was so happy as to re-establish the health of his daughter, whom he had persuaded her child died in a few minutes after its birth; a statement she was incapable of contradicting, as her delivery was followed by a milk fever, from which she recovered against the judgment of the Faculty.

Change of air, youth, exercise, and the resources of her own firm mind, did that for Lady Elinor which no effort of nature or art could do for her father;—every hour of his existence endeared the memory of the blessing he had lost; his heart, he would say, was broken:—his decay was slow, but sure; and, having permitted his daughter to decline the addresses of several noblemen, who were captivated by her beauty, he at length reminded her of her oath of obedience, and entreated she would let him see her married before he joined his sainted wife and son.

Lady Elinor's was a truly widowed heart; she calmly avowed the fire of love was extinct in her bosom. The Duke frowned, she trembled; he apostrophized his Duchess, she wept; he sighed the name of Malcolm, and she was vanquished.

They were then at Florence. An accident, which will be related in a future chapter, made them ac-

quainted with Lord Vallerton, afterwards the Earl of Denningcourt, who was then at the Court of Florence in a public character; and there the marriage took place, which fixed the home of the beautiful Elinor far from the native caſtle, far from the woods and well-remembered caverns of Athelane.

Lord Cheltenham had religiouſly kept his word: Lady Altmeria herſelf was never acquainted with the particulars of a tragedy her brother never forgave himſelf for occaſioning; but what the Duke could not conceal from himſelf, he thought it right to reveal to Lord Vallerton, and that with the unreſerved conſent of Lady Elinor, who, conſidering herſelf as the widow of her firſt and only love, felt no ſhame in confeſſing to her future huſband ſhe had been a mother.

Lord Vallerton was too paſſionately attached to her to have given her up, had the circumſtance been leſs favourable; but confident the woman he thought the moſt beautiful, could not fail to be the moſt virtuous, he declined hearing particulars, taking it on Lady Elinor's word, ſhe was a widow; and ſhe became his wife in the entire ignorance of the exiſtence of her daughter.

Two of the laſt collected acts of Duke Athelane, were to ſend Mrs. Moggy M'Laurin to England, to certify the exiſtence of his grand-daughter, and to put into the hands of Lord James Athelane ſix thouſand pounds, with directions to pay it to Doctor Croak,

for

for the benefit of his daughter; not, as he ſaid, chuſing to make this proviſion in his will.

Lord James, now Duke of Athelane, had a vague ſuſpicion that the proviſion was meant for the offſpring of ſome early gallantry, which his brother had reaſons for concealing from the world; and therefore paid the money without expreſſing, or indeed feeling, any curioſity about the perſon who was to enjoy it.

Lord Denningcourt, who was a man of the world, and always held an appointment either at Court, or in ſome department of government, had, in conſequence of the former, occaſional buſineſs to tranſact with Lord Gauntlet, and of courſe was on viſiting habits with him; but the ladies were not acquainted, though they often met in the circle, and were near neighbours in the country.

It was by mere chance the two noblemen met at Sir Solomon Muſhroom's door, on the morning when Major Buhanun was making enquiries relative to his nephew's effects.

Lord Denningcourt related the accident to his Lady at Court, where he met her. Her Ladyſhip was taken ill ſoon after; and, fainting in the circle, was obliged to be carried home.

She continued confined to her bed three weeks; but at the end of that period, torn with anguiſh and ſuſpenſe, ſhe formed the deſperate reſolution of ſeeing Major Buhanun.

Having

Having informed herſelf, from Sir Solomon Muſhroom, of his lodging, ſhe repaired thither, and from thence, on the information of the people, to the inn, where, in the affecting interview which made ſo ſtrong an impreſſion on Elinor, ſhe learned, that, according to her own eſtimation, ſhe had lived with her Lord an innocent adultereſs: Wallace Buhanun, the dear unfortunate huſband of her heart, having been relieved by a ſtrong antidote from the effects of the poiſon he had, in deſperation, ſwallowed, was only lately relieved from life's "fitful fever." The Major, who knew the late Duke, as well as many other of his kindred and countrymen, had been informed of his nephew's exiſtence, was aſtoniſhed to find the perſon moſt concerned ignorant of his fate; he endeavoured to reconcile her to what could not now be remedied or recalled; but though he ſucceeded in convincing her that to keep the anguiſh which almoſt diſtracted her, from diſturbing the repoſe of her Lord, was a duty ſhe owed both him and herſelf, ſhe parted from him in a ſtate of the moſt pitiable dejection; and the diſorder of her mind had ſoon ſo dangerous an effect on her health, that, added to the mortification his ſon's conduct inflicted, it induced his Lordſhip to give up all his appointments, and retire to Denningcourt Caſtle.

Mrs. Moggy M'Laurin was ſtill a hearty old dame. The Duke never truſted her with the place, or manner in which he had diſpoſed of his grandchild;

and to riſk Lady Denningcourt's peace, during the life of her huſband, without having it in her power, at leaſt, to put her in the way of diſcovering her child, would anſwer no good purpoſe; but the news no ſooner reached her that the Earl was dead, than down went her ſpinning-wheel, and away tramped Moggy twelve Scotch miles to Athelane Caſtle, where ſhe found the Duke preparing to go South, on a viſit to the noble widow.

On comparing Mrs. Moggy M'Laurin's information with the private proviſion made for the daughter of a perſon ſo near the place of Lady Elinor's *accouchement*, the Duke could not doubt that Doctor Croak was in the poſſeſſion of the ſecret clue to ſo intereſting a myſtery; and therefore took Mrs. Moggy M'Laurin with him to Denningcourt.

Lady Denningcourt's mind was made up: her relations were all rich; Mr. and Miſs Angus, her couſins, were heirs to her uncle, and the family eſtates ſhe determined ſhould remain in it; but to the thouſands and tens of thouſands in her own immediate gift, the poor, if Lord Denningcourt did not reform, ſhe reſolved ſhould be her heirs.

The Duke came South, expreſſly to fetch her to Athelane, while every thing was completed at her own houſe: London was a place to which ſhe never intended to return, and ſhe had bid the gay world adieu.

But

But what a revolution did the intelligence, now brought her, occaſion!—A child! Oh God! had ſhe a child?—did ſhe yet poſſeſs an object on which to laviſh the fund of tenderneſs, which the recent news of her Wallace revived in her boſom? a child! in whoſe dear face ſhe might trace the never, never forgotten graces that won her young heart! what, a daughter! a friend! a companion! to love, to cheriſh, to be proud of—to whom ſhe might transfer that inexhauſtible fondneſs which now aſſiſted her too faithful recollection in retracing the air, the manner, the look, the honour of her dear injured Wallace! Oh why wait till to-morrow—why not ſet out that inſtant, that very inſtant?—Alas! many wretched years had ſhe groaned in anguiſh, hiding her ſorrows from the eyes and ears of the unpitying world; and could ſhe be happy too ſoon? could a mother begin to atone to her child for the injurious deprivation of maternal love too ſoon?

The Duke was little leſs impatient; "Ah, my dear niece," ſaid he, "your child muſt be amiable; ſhe ſhall, ſhe muſt be Ducheſs of Athelane!" Lady Denningcourt wept; "Heaven grant her heart be not already touched! if it is, Ah how miſerable will it make us!"

Poor Lady Denningcourt! "Years," ſaid ſhe, "I have groaned in anguiſh;" yet, in the ſame inſtant, how eaſy did ſhe fall into the enthuſiaſtic error from which ſhe had herſelf ſuffered ſo much;—ſhe al-

ready anticipated the misfortune of her daughter's having formed an attachment beneath her high blood; but all her feeling and experience did not fuggeſt an idea of ſacrificing pride to happineſs; no ſuch expedient occurred to the mother or uncle—no, nor to Mrs. Moggy M'Laurin

During the long journey nothing was talked of, but firſt, the reſemblance the good woman proteſted the child bore to her father, and which her Ladyſhip predetermined to doat upon; then the match the Duke planned, which, by uniting the grand-daughter of his brother with the ſon of his ſiſter, would alſo unite the family honours and wealth; "a metere," Mrs. Moggy M'Laurin proteſted, "of muckle importance tull aw Scotland."

Arrived in London, they held a council how to proceed. "Leſt the dear creature ſhould be overpowered with the exceſs of her joy," ſaid Lady Denningcourt, "my uncle had better receive us here; Mrs. M'Laurin and myſelf will go to this Doctor, and claim my child."

"Ah gude trothe, my Lady, wull we; and noo ye ſal ken anither gude token;" and ſhe took from her trunk the counterpane, out of which the Doctor had cut a piece, which Mrs. Moggy M'Laurin diſcovered immediately after he was gone, but which, in conſequence of her preſentiment the child would one day be acknowledged, ſhe had concealed.

With

With this important tie on the Doctor's veracity, Lady Denningcourt and Mrs. Moggy M'Laurin ſet off for Penry, where, having demanded a private audience, the poor Doctor foreboded the ſetting of his ſplendid ſun, in the account he muſt give of money he had as laviſhly parted with, as unexpectedly received; he dared not deny the fact: Elinor was ſummoned; the mark found, and waſhed with the tears of the fond mother.

Elinor was not, however, overpowered with joy; her young heart was, indeed, not only touched—it was loſt—gone paſt recovery!

Mrs. Moggy M'Laurin was a true Scots woman; nothing ſhe better remembered than money tranſactions; the Doctor, beſides other ſums which, as every body knew the late Duke's generoſity, he had undoubtedly received, had alſo been entruſted with ſix thouſand pounds in one ſum, for the uſe of his ward, which, reminded by her, Lady Denningcourt merely mentioned, to prove whether he had been a faithful guardian; and when ſhe found, by his heſitating and ſtammering, that he had made uſe of the little fortune which might have been her child's all, ſhe expreſſed the ſtrongeſt reſentment, and indignantly commanded him to prepare to make reſtitution.

This, however, ſhe would not have perſiſted in demanding, had not a diſcovery of her daughter's attachment enraged the Duke, who inſiſted that the Doctor had ſchemed his ſon's advancement, by throw-

ing him in the way of his ward, though he muſt know ſhe was of ſuperior rank and connexion.

Lady Denningcourt's heart melted in tenderneſs over her daughter; that daughter, on the contrary, had recollections inimical to reſpect;—ſhe had ſet it down as a decided fact, that the lady who viſited Major Buhanun, intrigued with him: Mrs. Bawſky had declared the thing was abſolutely certain, and ſhe had no reaſon to doubt her ſagacity in facts of that ſort.—Then there were three people in the world ſhe tenderly loved: Roſa, young Croak, and Mrs. Harley—from all theſe ſhe was going to be torn;—with the former, as living with the perſon to whom her mother was criminally attached, ſhe could not correſpond—and how could ſhe ſee the two laſt? Then again, ſhe was uſed to the nominal uncle and aunt—and with how many wiſer people than Elinor does habit paſs for affection?

It was in vain the gentle, affable Lady Denningcourt wiſhed to gain the confidence of her daughter; in vain ſhe took her, in the moſt elegant ſtile, firſt to Bath, then to Denningcourt; ſhe carried with her all her firſt unalterable predilections; ſhe felt abaſhed in company—miſerable alone—loſt her colour, her appetite, and her ſpirits.

The reſerve ſhe promiſed Roſa in her letter to impoſe on herſelf, in regard to young Croak, laſted juſt as long as he found it impoſſible to ſpeak to her, and vaniſhed the firſt time he watched her walking at a diſtance

diſtance from the houſe: one interview ſucceeded another; no letter arrived from Roſa to aſſiſt her ſtruggles againſt love and young Croak; her mother's fondneſs was reproach; her virtuous advice, hypocriſy; the polite habits ſhe recommended, taſks; and at length, when the Duke, to whom ſhe never ſpoke without trembling, nor ever looked at without confuſion, talked of making her a Ducheſs, preſenting her to the King and Queen, and a thouſand things to the ſame effect, wiſhing to excite her emulation, ſhe fairly told Jack of all the dreadful things that were to happen, and as ſhe had more money than ſhe thought they could want during their whole lives, readily acceded to his propoſal of going off to Gretna-Green to be married, and eſcape being a Ducheſs.

They were ſtopped, as Betty ſaid, and then the thoughts of being carried back to be made a Ducheſs, to be ſhewn to the King and Queen, to live with Lords and Ladies, to be decked with diamonds, to fare ſumptuouſly every day, together with the ſight of poor Jack firſt hanging to the wheels of the Duke's carriage, then rolling in the road, tearing his hair, and biting the duſt, was too much for her little reaſon —it tottered on its throne, and, to the unſpeakable grief of Lady Denningcourt and her friends, was by degrees totally overthrown! She had been carried to Doctor W. and was now attended by a gentleman of the Faculty recommended by him.

Meanwhile, young Croak having been ſent home to his father, with denunciation of vengeance from the Duke if ever he was ſeen or heard of again at Denningcourt, old Croak could hit on no other way of keeping himſelf out of priſon, but putting his ſon there; he therefore conſcientiouſly arreſted him for certain ſums ſaid to be advanced, of which the poor youth had never ſeen a farthing, and allowed him half-a-guinea a week to ſubſiſt on in the Marſhalſea priſon.

CHAP. IV.

Shewing, among other important matters, how the Beggar was turned out of doors; how ſhe got one friend, and loſt another; and how fine ladies manage, whoſe attachments are formed without eſteem, and broken without regret.

THE bed of juſtice, held by Duke Athelane and the ladies his counſellors, ended as beds of juſtice formerly did where they were in faſhion—the evidence was all on one ſide, and the edict pronounced by him, in whom the power was veſted, accordingly.

The

The two young ladies agreed that our heroine was a very ſuſpicious character, with this difference:—Miſs Angus never ſaw a more intereſting countenance, nor Miſs Bruce a more artful one.

The Duke himſelf had taken very little notice of her perſon, but he confeſſed her emotions appeared to him natural enough; however, her reſidence with Mrs. Woudbe, her appearance ſo unlike that of a perſon admitted to aſſociate with the elegant Counteſs of Gauntlet, her paſſing at that hour ſo cloſe to the houſe alone, and ſo ill-dreſſed, were certainly circumſtances which gave weight to the ſuſpicion, that there was more of deſign than accident in the whole.

Elinor's attachment to young Croak was a matter which entirely militated againſt the Duke's firſt wiſh of uniting her to his nephew; that firſt wiſh ſtill held ſo predominant a place in his mind, and he had ſo ardently preſſed it upon Lady Denningcourt, that it was not till ſhe found the poor girl's head unequal to her internal ſtruggle, that ſhe remembered how impoſſible ſhe had herſelf found it, though bleſſed with a much ſtronger mind, to regulate a firſt paſſion by the laws of prudence; and though an alliance with a youth very inferior in perſon and talent to him who made the indelible impreſſion on her own heart, who had not the advantage of education, and, above all, whoſe blood was plebeian, was not to be thought on, yet there were moments when ſhe regretted the impoſſibility of making her daughter happy her own way.

As ſhe did not, however, communicate thoſe regrets to the Duke, he ſtill cheriſhed the hope of ſeeing all the fortune of the Houſe of Athelane united to the Dukedom in the perſon of Mr. Angus; and not aware of the many channels through which the moſt important ſecrets of a great family meander into the world, hoped, when the reaſon of the unhappy Elinor was reſtored, of which he had the moſt ſanguine confidence, her firſt paſſion would be forgotten, and remain a ſecret to all but the near friends of the family.

In this hope, the ſuſpicion that Roſa was an agent of the Croaks, very naturally alarmed him; and as he could never have conceived, from his own feelings, that ſuch a character as a father, callous to the pleadings of nature on behalf of his only child, could exiſt, he certainly did Doctor Croak the injuſtice to believe him intereſted for his ſon; more eſpecially, as marrying a young perſon of Elinor's high expectations, would alſo prevent his being troubled about the refund of property veſted in him for her ſole uſe. If, indeed, the laſt conſideration had not eſcaped the wiſdom both of the Doctor and his *chere amie*, the young man would not probably have been eating commons at this time in the Marſhalſea priſon.

Lady Denningcourt's mental ſufferings, on account of Elinor's deranged intellects, were unſpeakable: her whole ſyſtem was unnerved, and the efforts of friends, by whom ſhe was equally loved and reſpect-

ed, to conſole her under ſo great a calamity, were vain; the patient endurance of her character, indeed, prevented her wounding them with complaints; but the only real comfort ſhe was capable of enjoying, was that which gave a foretaſte of the eternal happineſs which good actions muſt enſure to ſpirits like her's, when her ſoul ſunk in deſpondent agony, ſhe walked from her houſe to the village, where the inhabitants thronged around her with bleſſings.

The Duke of Athelane, a nobleman not more reſpected on account of his high rank, than beloved for the native urbanity of his mind, entered the library where our heroine was, prejudiced and prejudging, two evils from which the law of the land protects the greateſt criminal, but from which the innocent ſtranger had no appeal.

Roſa, who was now acquainted with the Duke's quality, and who, notwithſtanding ſhe had ſo little reaſon to compliment her own diſcernment, having ſo recently found high virtues were not always concomitants of high rank, had a ſort of inherent reſpect for nobility, and felt awed and confounded: ſhe involuntarily roſe at the Duke's entrance; and as his Grace neither ſeated himſelf, nor motioned her to do ſo, ſhe continued ſtanding.

The Duke, full of his own ſubject, bluntly aſked if ſhe was acquainted with Doctor Croak?

Roſa heſitated and bluſhed.

Guilty, upon honour! thought his Grace. The queſtion was indeed, he ſaid, ſuperfluous. He next preſumed ſhe reſided at Delworth Houſe.

Again Roſa bluſhed and heſitated.

Guilty again, thought his Grace.

"I—I have lived there, Sir; but—but——"

"But you have thoughts, I preſume, of leaving it."

Roſa's affirmative was deciſive.

"And to remove. Perhaps you meant to do us the honour of removing hither."

It was now only that Roſa perceived the haughty and auſtere brow of the noble interrogator; and ſhe felt at once confounded, abaſhed, and diſtreſſed:—a thouſand ſharp points ſeemed to accompany the ruſhing blood into her face, neck, and arms.

"You bluſh:—is it from ſhame of detection? or, for guilt is very tenacious, I may poſſibly have had the misfortune to excite your anger? I do not, however, deprecate the reſentment, in which you will have the goodneſs to leave this houſe; but you muſt allow me to add my advice—not to be ſeen near it again. Lady Denningcourt is a woman of honour, the young ladies under her roof have a character, and the Duke of Athelane is their protector. Permit me (and he offered his hand to conduct her)—I will ſhew you the way."

The heart of the poor Beggar ſwelled almoſt to burſting, when turned from the houſe of thoſe who had created an intereſt ſo new in her feelings; yet

ſo impreſſed with reſpect for the angry judge, who thus paſſed on her a ſentence aggravated by irony and contempt, that ſhe had neither courage to ſpeak nor reſiſt the motion he made of leading her, by a ſhort turning, to a gate which opened to the park; but before ſhe reached it, humbled and mortified as ſhe felt herſelf, affection and concern for Elinor reſtored her to ſpirit and recollection.

A baniſhment from this tranquil abode was alſo a baniſhment from Elinor, and that, perhaps, for ever. Comparing Betty's incoherent account with what ſhe knew of the diſpoſition of her poor friend, ſhe flattered herſelf that her ſoothings and conſolements would have more effect than any medical care, and reſolved to make an effort of ſuch importance to them both, and, however difficult to aſſume courage to reſiſt the abſolute command of the Duke, oppoſe her humble remonſtrance to his decided reſolution.

Almoſt ſuffocated with heat and the variety of her feelings, ſhe took off a little black hat, which confined her hair, and, with a motion of her head and ſhoulders, both graceful and intereſting, threw back the redundant cheſnut treſſes it liberated, and inhaled the air before ſhe could attempt to ſpeak.

The Duke viewed her with fixed attention; and the ſeverity of his look, by degrees, relaxed into a curious and not unpleaſed ſcrutiny of her features; he nevertheleſs motioned to proceed towards the gate, but ſtopped when ſhe ſpoke.

"If

"If affection did not impel—if friendſhip did not ſupport me, I could not, believe me, Sir, preſume, on my own account, to deprecate the ſeverity you think I deſerve. I venerate the character of Lady Denningcourt; and ſure, with thoſe monuments of her goodneſs and charity before me, it is not neceſſary to ſay how *much* I venerate her; yet, perhaps, all who admire and reſpect her, cannot feel the ſentiment which at this moment——but I cannot explain it—it is indefinable even to myſelf. The young ladies, happy under her roof, and ſafe under the protection of the Duke of Athelane, can never be injured by mere ſufferance of a poor unprotected, unallied, unhappy——"

Her voice failed—ſhe ſtepped forward to conceal her tears; and having a little recovered, finding the Duke had remained in the ſame place, turned back with a grace which was the peculiar character of her every movement: the waving treſſes of her fine hair ſhading her fair forehead; a tear on each glowing cheek; her hat in one hand, the other open palm modeſtly ſpread in an attitude of humble remonſtrance; an earneſt but melancholy meaning impreſſed on every ſpeaking feature.

"Have I aſked, Sir, to be admitted to the ſociety of theſe happy ladies? Alas! no;—I know and feel the humble diſtance at which poverty and diſtreſs place me; *my* honour and *my* innocence are the honour and innocence of a friendleſs child of penury;—it is known

known only to God, and felt only by myself, and is of too obscure and humble a texture to claim even a candid judgment;—congenial principles cannot assimilate in uncongenial rank and circumstance—that is a hard lesson with which I have long become familiar; therefore I gaze at an humble distance on the radiant virtues I am not for that reason less emulous to imitate; and do not expect, nor even desire, that the ladies under the Duke of Athelane's protection, should descend from their high rank, and higher honour; all I petition for, and I conjure you, Sir, as you regard that dear girl, whose derangement I so deeply deplore, do not refuse me—I would kneel—I *will* kneel—mine is the humiliation of the heart—and it bends before you; do not deny me—let me watch my Elinor—let me try whether the soothings of friendship will not have more efficacy than the art of medicine; you know not, my Lord, how she loved me—how I love her."

"Do you know the cause of her disorder?"

"I am afraid I do, my Lord, know the cause to which it is attributed; but it may be the effect of more causes than one. The sudden change in her life, new claims on her affection, an entire new system of existence, a total subversion of her old habits and connexions, the objects long dear to sight and memory lost, and replaced by others, which, however preferable in themselves, are not endeared to her by habit:—these, irritated by a latent attachment, to which

which her feelings had not given a name, nor ſtamped a character, have been, I doubt not, the united cauſes of her diſorder."

This hint was preciſely that moſt acceptable to the Duke; and the grace and energy of the fair pleader were irreſiſtible;—there was in her manner, as John would perhaps have ſaid,

"A prone and ſpeechleſs dialect,
"Such as move men;"

and in her features a combination ſo familiar to the Duke, that when (her whole heart in her eyes) ſhe beſought him to grant her petition, he anſwered, after a long and earneſt examination of her countenance, by bluntly aſking of what country ſhe was?

Again the deep glow tinged her ſkin; yet the confuſion was tranſient. She had owned the obſcurity of her circumſtances, and conſcious that no inquiſition could diſcover an action to her diſhonour, anſwered, "Eſſex."

"Eſſex!" repeated the Duke;—"and how old?"

"Twenty, my Lord."

"What! the age of Elinor?"

"Yes, my Lord!"—and inſpired by a ray of hope, which his ſoftened look confirmed,

"——— we grew together,
"Like to a double cherry ſeeming parted,
"But an union in partition."

The

The Duke half ſmiled. "You quote from high authority."

"I quote like a parrot, Sir—what I have heard repeated from the heart of true affection;—but ſuffer me to quote *your* high authority, my Lord, for returning to my friend."

"And how would you manage with your other friends? my authority would not excuſe you for ſo rude and indecent a lapſe of orderly behaviour, as remaining out late, without apprizing them why and where you ſtay;—the ſun, you ſee, is ſetting; and we are not on habits of friendſhip with that family."

Roſa could not, without intruding a long ſtory on the Duke, and betraying her friend, explain to him how lately ſhe had in ſome degree prepared the family at Delworth for ſuch a lapſe; ſhe therefore remained ſilent, vexation and diſappointment on her brow, which the Duke was earneſtly reading.

"I am tempted to confeſs a great weakneſs to you," ſaid he, "if I thought you would not expoſe me."

Roſa looked ſupriſed, and rather alarmed.

"It is this," he continued:—"within the laſt half hour I diſliked you extremely, notwithſtanding you are ſo handſome; that diſlike was therefore the reſult of conſidering you, as, at beſt, I fear you are, a ſuſpicious character; and though you have given me no proof to the contrary, except talking very prettily, and looking not handſomer, but more intereſting,

I feel

I feel myſelf diſpoſed to take your beauty, and a reſemblance you certainly have, come from where you will, to the amiable foundreſs of thoſe charities, as a ſecurity for your integrity, though I know one is the common trait of deceit, and the other the certain effect of chance."

Roſa's alarm vaniſhed. "If you knew, my Lord, how you flatter me——"

"Yes, you may well be flattered if all your conqueſts are ſo ſudden and ſo ſure."

"Have I then conquered, my Lord? and will you lead me back to my friend?"

The Duke pauſed. "No," ſaid he, "I am enſlaved like an old man, but I will not be duped like one. Allow me to bid you a good evening;—I ſhall talk the affair over with Lady Denningcourt, without concealing how much you reſemble her, which alone will convince her I am not your foe; we ſhall make our arrangements, and depend on it you will hear of them."

What now could Roſa do but accept the Duke's offered hand, and ſuffer him to lead her to the park; where, after he returned to the houſe, conſidering it would be very late to go to the village, and perhaps indulging a ſecret preſentiment that there would not, after the Duke's promiſed converſation with Lady Denningcourt, be a neceſſity for her going there at all, ſhe caſt a fond look behind, and returned to Delworth.

Croſſing

Croſſing a court-yard, in order to go to her chamber by the back way, ſhe obſerved a great number of imperials, boxes, &c. and ſuſpected, what had really happened, the bride elect and her party were arrived.

She had aſcended only a few of the back-ſtairs, when the houſe-maid, who gave her the letter in the afternoon, informed her that, as the houſe was now very full, and more company expected, and, as beſides, their young Lord's intended lady's woman choſe to ſleep near her lady, the houſekeeper had ordered the things to be removed from the room where ſhe had heretofore ſlept, into one of the little garrets.

"The garret!" repeated Roſa.

"Yes, 'em; cauſe, 'em, ſhe ſuppoſes, 'em, you will not be long here, 'em."

Roſa had turned half round, reſolving, by immediately quitting the houſe, to avoid further inſult; but recollecting that ſhe was to depend on hearing from the Duke, and that he would naturally ſend to Delworth, ſhe reſolved, at the riſk of all poſſible endurance, to wait the reſult, and followed the girl into a ſmall low-roofed room on the attic ſtory; where all the things ſhe left in her chamber were crowded, and where, ſqueezing herſelf by the bed to the one ricketty chair, ſhe ſat down, pale and almoſt breathleſs.

The girl ſaid, as ſhe had no dinner, no wonder ſhe was faint; but to-morrow——

"To-

"To-morrow!" repeated Rosa; "I trust I shall not pass another day in this house."

Dear heart! the girl wondered at that, as there was going to be sitch grand, new-fangled doings; but come on't what would, she would run and ax the house-steward for a glass of wind and some biscuits, for folk were not to be starved, if they did go to kept-madams.

Rosa never was in greater need of refreshment; but though her body was not less fatigued and faint than her mind was agitated, she heartily regretted not going on to Denningcout village; for no place could be more comfortless or disagreeable than the garret, to which she was consigned.

The girl returned with her hands full. "There," said she, "is a whole bottle of *Whydontee* wind, and a manchet, and some biscuits; no need of axing about the matter, wind and ale is as plenty all over our ouse now as water; and you would be fit to die a laughing—they are all as joyous in sarvants' all, as if the wedden-day was this minit. There's one of the strange footmen taken off one Madam Feversham."

"Feversham! is Mrs. Feversham here?"

"Yes, 'em;—our ouse will be like the inn at Denningcourt—quite a Noak's hark. And so the footman—I shall know his name at supper—he is so monstrous droll;—he ses Madam Feversham was all bedizon'd like an old ewe dressed lamb fashion; and the old gentleman too—quite a smart old Grecian—

what

what does he do but chuck me under the chin, as funny as you pleaſe;—I wonder what Madam Feverſham would ſay to that?—but come, 'em, let's be ſociable (and drawing the cork, ſhe firſt drank a glaſs of *Whydontee* herſelf, and then helped Roſa) and now, 'em," ſaid ſhe, ſquatting herſelf on the ſide of the bed, "I'll tell you a few ſecrets. Our family are going to Old Nick as faſt as they can drive; our Lord's over head and ears in debt to all the rich tenants, and ſo hard-hearted to the poor, and raiſes their rents ſo, they can't pay;—ſo they were ready to go wild with joy when the lawyer came down to injunket them all not to pay our ſteward; and ſo, without the bride's portion, Lord knows how we ſhould all get back to Pall-mall again. Oh, London, London!—Lord, I am ſo dry!—but London's the place for my money! though there's Old Nick to pay there too; there's Lady Lowder, and that handſome Sir Jacob, only our folk don't want it mentioned juſt now, 'cauſe 'tis a diſparagement to the bride; but her huſband ſes as he'll put 'em in the Commons, unleſs the old gentleman comes down."

Mrs. Modely, at this inſtant, threw open the door; and ſcowling, under her curved brow, at the girl, the wine, and Roſa, ordered the latter to follow her to her lady.

Perhaps it was not an abſolute miracle, that though the beauty of the lovely Counteſs of Gauntlet was, with the aid of a little art, ſtationary, experience ſhould

ſhould have ſo increaſed her natural talent for intrigue, ſhe was at this period an over-match for Sir Solomon Muſhroom himſelf, who, of all her dear and particular friends, was him againſt whom ſhe bore the moſt inveterate hatred, for reaſons it is time to unfold to our readers.

The firſt hint the Earl, and of courſe his beautiful Counteſs, received of the exiſtence of their nephew, was from the beſt lawyer in Great-Britain; her Ladyſhip's roſy lips ſevered on this occaſion with execrations on the duplicity of their agent, Sir Solomon Muſhroom, and on herſelf, if ſhe did not revenge it.

The Earl now regretted he had declined the alliance of the greateſt ſcoundrel in the world; the Counteſs, with equal ſincerity, wiſhed the Earl of Denningcourt had never been introduced to the Muſhrooms:—to theſe regrets ſucceeded a reſolution, by breaking off one treaty to make way for another, and with other rules of conduct to be obſerved at this critical period, preceded the writing a card, requeſting to ſee Sir Solomon Muſhroom.

Though that profound politician, who, like the robber in Gil Blas, dealt on the ſquare with all mankind, was already in poſſeſſion of the ſecret, and had made up his own mind to profit by the event, preponderate how it would, he choſe to be the moſt aſtoniſhed perſon of the three, when he attended his patron, and heard from the Counteſs what had happened.

"Did

"Did you not tell us this ſhocking boy was dead, Sir Solomon?" cried her Ladyſhip, with bitterneſs.

"When, my good Lady?" anſwered the Knight, with great compoſure.

"Certainly, my good friend," joined the Earl, mildly, "you gave us room to conclude——"

Sir Solomon collectedly denied the concluſion, and, with infinite reſpect, referred to his letters from Philadelphia.

Lady Gauntlet's acquired habit of ſmiling, ill concealed her rage at his triumphant proof of cunning; but the Earl, with equal wiſdom and moderation, delivered it as his decided opinion, that the honour and intereſt of his good friend Sir Solomon Muſhroom were as much intereſted as his own in defeating the claims of the pretended heir.

This the Knight neither granted nor denied, in a manner ſo lukewarm, as convinced the noble pair ſomething was rotten in the ſtate. Lady Gauntlet then artfully dropping a converſation, in which he was not intereſted, began one on his daughter and her expected marriage, but was aſtoniſhed to find that too treated with indifference.

The Counteſs was not a woman to be foiled by cunning; ſhe was not an intimate in Sir Solomon's family, but her woman was; and having learned, within two hours after his departure, that though Mrs. Perſian, Miſs Muſhroom's woman, was one of the beſt dreſſers of hair, and layer on of *rouge*, of any

Engliſh

Engliſh woman in London, an old family nurſe, admitted by ſtealth, robbed her of one of the firſt privileges of her place, for ſhe was the excluſive repoſitory of all her young lady's ſecrets; and with this nurſe our Counteſs ſoon became acquainted.

Sir Solomon Muſhroom had too many affairs of importance on his mind to remember the unlimited confidence he had formerly repoſed in one Dorothy Wright; her memory, however, was *leſs* tenacious—ſhe very well knew the child, whom ſhe had aſſiſted Mr. Hanſon in perſuading her miſtreſs to carry to America, was the ſame youth to whom her eldeſt daughter was attached.

When it did not militate againſt her own or her children's intereſt, nothing gave Dorothy more pleaſure than vexing her old maſter; and, in the confidence that Horace would ſome time or other turn out a *ſomebody*, ſhe had encouraged her daughter to expect the return and advancement of her firſt love. As to Lords, ſince her youngeſt daughter had married one, and forgot her, Dorothy thought they were no great catch; but after vain expectation of the *ſomebody's* return, Horace was on the point of being given up both by nurſe and Miſs, as the former waited only for her daughter's eſtabliſhment, to demand her own terms of their father, and the latter ſaw ſo many charming conſequences of being a Counteſs, that had not Lord Denningcourt been ſuch a lazy wooer, ſhe would have infallibly been one herſelf.

But

But Horace happened to preſent himſelf juſt in the very nick of time, to enquire after the Beggar, with an appearance ſo elegant, and a demeanour ſo haughty, as raiſed the colour in Miſs Charlotte's cheek, and threw her father into the moſt profound meditation.

If Sir Solomon's girls were Peereſſes, no matter who were the Peers;—he had never forgiven his patron for declining his alliance; and, as in caſe of a public inveſtigation, if his own immaculate character eſcaped, it muſt be by miracle, he wiſely determined to ſecure that, and the fortune and honours of the houſe of Montreville, in ſpite of the power of his patron, or the beauty of his lady, by offering his daughter, and eighty thouſand pounds, twenty more than he gave her ſiſter, to Horace, with ſome certain *proofs* included in the marriage portion.

Of this offer he told his daughter, who underſtood nothing of the *proofs*; but ſhe told it her nurſe, who comprehended the whole; and, under the influence of a beautiful card-purſe reſpectably filled, *ſhe* again told it to Lady Gauntlet, who knew much more of the matter than herſelf, and who, of courſe, was filled with revengeful ire againſt the traitor, Sir Solomon Muſhroom.

It was in the interval between Sir Solomon's offer, and the young gentleman's anſwer, that the former was ſummoned to hear of the exiſtence of young Montreville; and it was alſo then that Lady Gauntlet formed a plan of revenge worthy of herſelf.

Sir Solomon thought, as his former employer, Mr. Whittal, was dead, that the ſecret of the Montrevilles reſted only in himſelf; he therefore reſolved to make or unmake, as ſuited his own private intereſt or humour.

Lady Gauntlet was better informed;—beſide Sir Solomon and the communicative Mrs. Dorothy, who gratified her own pique by revealing all ſhe knew, ſave and except the maternal ſecret of ſuch importance to her daughters, there were two more perſons, one of whom ſhe knew, and the other, ſhe feared, would ariſe in evidence againſt her.

Mr. Whittal, her relation at Belfaſt, on whom, by her intereſt, advancement and lucrative places had been ſhowered, died, notwithſtanding all, inſolvent; and his only ſon, a fine tall handſome Hibernian, appeared at the Earl's levee in very ſhabby mourning, without ſixpence in his pocket, or any means of ſubſiſting like a *gentleman*, except a few ſecrets confided to him by his father, on his death-bed.

Lady Gauntlet procured this young man a lucrative appointment in the colonies, and, with five hundred guineas in ſpecie to begin the world, he fell down the river Thames in a Weſt India trader.

"I breathe," ſaid her Ladyſhip, "now that horrid fellow is gone." But this breathing buſineſs was rather premature; for though her young relation did certainly ſail down the river, yet, before the ſhip reached the Nore, the wind became adverſe; he ran up

up to London for one night, ſtaid three, went to half a play, a brothel, and a gaming-houſe; from the laſt he returned *minus* in the neat ſum of five hundred pounds, beſides his watch, buckles, and every other portable of value.

In this ſituation, ſtripped of every thing but the ſecret entruſted to him by his dying parent, Mr. Patrick Whittal again preſented himſelf at the levee of his relation, the Earl of Gauntlet.

My Lord was, at that particular time, not only very angry, but very poor, and my Lady the ſame; notwithſtanding which, after a few hours' conſideration, a ſecond five hundred were advanced; and couſin Whittal ſwore he would never trouble ſuch kind relations more: that he did not keep his word was not ſo much his fault as his misfortune, for he ſet out in a chaiſe and four from his Lordſhip's door; but the wind having become favourable, the ſhip, after waiting two tides, had ſailed without him.

"Amid the roſes, fierce repentance rears her ſnaky creſt."

This Lady Gauntlet might have owned, had ſhe not been too proud to admit any thing againſt herſelf; for couſin Whittal was now on the town, ſpending the ſecond five hundred with the ſpirit of an Emperor, and in danger of being ſuperſeded in the appointment procured for him with great trouble and difficulty. This couſin was, however, but one, and not perhaps that moſt feared, of two evidences which, as ſoon as the

claims of the rightful heir were known, would riſe to cruſh her.

The laſt time the late Earl of Gauntlet was mentioned, he was ordered to a milder climate for change of air, which is in plain Engliſh to ſay, that the phyſicians had pocketed fees, without benefiting their patient, till their modeſty could do ſo no longer; and therefore, that the inefficacy of the cart-load of medicines, which they had preſcribed, ſhould not be witneſſed by the ſwiniſh multitude, they rather choſe his ſpirit ſhould be reſigned in a foreign land; and accordingly the Earl, his beautiful ſiſter-in-law, the Honourable Mrs. Montreville, with her as honourable ſpouſe, and a ſplendid retinue, ſet out for Italy, landed at Leghorn, and ſo on to Florence, where, in a ſuperb palace, on the banks of the Arno, the Earl flattered himſelf he was recovering, while, baſking in the brilliant glances which ſhot from the eyes of his fair ſiſter, he waſted to a ſhadow.

Lord Vallerton, ſon to the then aged and reſpectable Earl of Denningcourt, was Miniſter at the Tuſcan Court during the reſidence of the Earl at Florence, and of courſe, though a widower, and father of a fine youth of ſixteen, an admirer of her whom all the world admired, till the Duke of Athelane, who, like Lord Gauntlet, retreated to Italy from the univerſal conqueror, and, like him alſo, was accompanied by a beautiful female companion in a palace on the banks of the Arno, cauſed an alteration in his feelings.

Lady

Lady Elinor Athelane was all Mrs. Montreville was not, and Lord Vallerton's heart was very ſoon devoted to her.

This being one of the injuries Mrs. Montreville never forgave, the Duke, who viſited his invalid countryman, though the ladies were on very diſtant terms, found the cordiality, with which he was at firſt received, gradually diminiſh; and he was on the point of entirely declining his viſits, when a loud cry for aſſiſtance, and confuſed exclamations of the Earl's Engliſh ſervants, mixed with the Italian, induced him to ruſh from his own palace into that of his neighbour, where he met Mrs. Montreville in the ſaloon, pale and diſordered, exclaiming againſt the wretch! the vile murdereſs! and, on entering an inner apartment, beheld the Earl, wounded, fallen from his chair in the arms of his brother; and, at a ſmall diſtance, a beautiful female, of wild and diſordered appearance, whoſe bright black eyes ſeemed ſtarting from her head, and her face overſpread with the hue of death.

"Oh Duke!" ſaid the wounded man, "are you come? do you condeſcend to viſit me at this awful moment—to be my comforter—to ſtand between my ſoul and the blackeſt perdition? I am wounded, and my weak ſtate forbids me to hope for life; but bear witneſs of what I declare:—That lady is my wife—I have injured—I have ruined her—but I am her lawful huſband—I deſerve the death I have received from her hand;—but, Duke, *ſhe* is innocent. I *know you*

—promiſe to protect her—to remove her out of the reach of indignity;—ſhe is virtuous, and of family—promiſe, and I ſhall die in peace."

The ſtarting eyes of the lady were fixed in deep and hollow attention on the wounded man. As he finiſhed the laſt ſentence, ſhe uttered a ſhriek, and fell into convulſions.

The ſurgeons, who now arrived, deſired ſhe might be removed; and Mrs. Montreville was prepared to aſſiſt the ſervants in carrying her away.

"Stop!" cried the Earl, with ſuch agitation that ſtreams of blood flowed not only from his wound, but out of his mouth and noſtrils—"touch her not. Oh, Duke Athelane! will you ſee me expire in torture?—your own Elinor is not more pure.

The Duke of Athelane was one of the few Britiſh noblemen who carried the honour and credit of their own country with them among foreigners, and who returned with it to their own land untarniſhed; his word was ſacred, and he was conſequently cautious of giving it; but the convulſive graſp of the wounded man, the pitiable diſtortions of the fine countenance before him, and a recollection of the ſad events in his own family, which had given a death-blow to his domeſtic peace, were irreſiſtible impulſes to ſympathy; he not only promiſed to protect the injured wife, but, on the Earl's repeating, "Take her away—for God's ſake, take her away," he gave orders for her removal

to

to his own palace, whither, as ſoon as the Earl's wound was dreſſed, he followed.

Lady Elinor, of whoſe ſoft and ſympathiſing diſpoſition it is impoſſible to ſay too much, needed no ſtronger claim on her attention, than the ſuffering of a fellow-creature. But when the lady revived to a ſenſe of her misfortunes, and a power to recite them, her cauſe appeared to be that of humanity; and the Duke's anxiety to protect her became more ardent than even that of the penitent huſband.

When Magdalena preſented herſelf at the grate of the convent of the Order of Mercy, and found, though received with demonſtrations of tenderneſs by the Abbeſs, that ſhe had been the dupe of a forgery, which could anſwer no purpoſe but ſeparating her from her child, no perſuaſions nor proffered advantages could prevail on her to remain at Liſbon a moment after a veſſel was procured to carry her back to England.

Don Joſeph Tavora Alvarez, who was yet a bachelor, would have withdrawn his claims on her grandfather's fortune, had ſhe condeſcended but to conceal a ceremony, which left her a deſerted wife; but, beſides that ſhe never could ſtoop to ambiguity, the will that diſinherited her was unequivocal; and ſhe imputed all her ſufferings to the having violated it.

In the agonies which incertitude of her child's fate inflicted, it was to the care of the Abbeſs alone that ſhe was indebted for the independence with which ſhe returned to England.

"I ſhall ſee you no more, my child," ſaid the tender aunt; "but my fortune at leaſt is my own, and neither that nor my bleſſing can injure thee."

Having procured from the Factory a number of Engliſh bank notes, in exchange for gold, after putting what was neceſſary into a purſe, the good Abbeſs made a confidential ſiſter quilt the reſt in the corſets of the diſtracted Magdalena, who, with a fortune thus rendered portable, ſailed for Falmouth.

The winds, though favourable, bore no proportion to the impatience of Magdalena; ſhe landed at Falmouth—got into a chaiſe—reached Holly-Aſh—found it in ruins—heard that her ſon had been taken by Mrs. Littleton and her lover, Mr. Hanſon, to London—followed them thither—inquired in vain of all Mrs. Littleton's acquaintance—took the reſolution of going to Belfaſt after Hanſon—found Mr. Whittal there, but found him dumb in reſpect to the object of her enquiry.

As *there were*, however, who could and did talk, Magdalena heard her huſband had really outlived all his couſins—that he was a Britiſh Peer—that he was a bachelor, and ſo attached to his brother's wife, that it was expected her children would be heirs to his fortune as well as title.

Magdalena's heart ſunk—her head turned round. This then was the fatal myſtery: *her* child was removed to make way for thoſe of this ſiſter-in-law.—Italy! what! was it to go to Italy! to the world's

end,

end, ſhe would follow! ſhe would pierce into the bowels of the earth! yes, and ſhe bleſſed the provident kindneſs of the Superior of the Order of Mercy, who had ſo amply ſupplied her with the means—ſhe would hire a veſſel, and ſet off that very day.

But Magdalena's mind happened to be too potent for her ſtrength—ſhe was obliged to wait the criſis of a fever; during which the good woman, who was hired to attend her, did her part towards relieving her of all worldly cares, by ſtealing her pockets, her watch, and the few clothes ſhe brought with her from England.

The people of the houſe, who were not in the ſecret, redoubled their attention after this accident; and Magdalena, having ſtill her corſets left, and thinking of nothing but her voyage, made ſo light of the theft after her recovery, that it was with as much ſurpriſe as reluctance they ſaw a woman, who had ſuch extraordinary reſources, and valued money ſo little, leave their houſe.

The voyage was ſhort. Magdalena had learned, from a banker at Belfaſt, Lord Gauntlet's exact directions. She reached Florence the day after her arrival at Leghorn; was ſet down at the portico of the palace which the Earl occupied, and ruſhed, unannounced, through the ſaloon into an inner apartment, where her huſband and his divine ſiſter-in-law were repoſing, without a preſentiment of ſo unwelcome a viſiter, after an airing in the beautiful vale of Arno—

the Earl's piſtols, who, adhering to the faſhion of dear little Ireland, never made any excurſion without them, lying on a table beſide him.

The Honourable Mrs. Montreville ſhrieked, and Lord Gauntlet ſhook from head to foot, at ſight of the injured Magdalena, whoſe diſordered dreſs, the wildneſs of her manner, the fire darting from her eyes, and her eager demands to have her child reſtored to her, petrified the one, and aſtoniſhed the other; for his Lordſhip, with all his plans, would never have hit on one ſo diabolical as robbing a fond mother of her only child.

Magdalena, with the eſſence of purity in her ſoul, and an indignant ſenſe of injury on her brow, ſcorned to beſtow a glance on her libertine huſband's companion; it was the agonized feelings of a mother, a fond and doating mother trembling for the fate of her darling, that ſpoke in every anxious feature, as, regardleſs of the Earl's real, and Mrs. Montreville's well-feigned aſtoniſhment, ſhe inceſſantly demanded her child.

Mr. Montreville entered, and would have interfered.

"Away, away!" cried the almoſt frantic Magdalena, "dare not to interpoſe between a diſtracted mother and a wretch whoſe actions outrage nature! Who art thou?"

Mr. Montreville made an attempt at dignity;—he had the honour to be Lord Gauntlet's brother, and that lady's huſband.

"Ha!"

"Ha!" cried Magdalena, a deadly pale overſpreading her face, "art thou the brother? and is that woman thy wife? Ah, my child! my Horace! my ſweet boy! ſole treaſure of my exiſtence!—Oh thou accurſed father! what haſt thou done? Speak, ſave me from madneſs! thou canſt not!—And is my child murdered? was he in the way of this ſiſter and this brother? and muſt I never ſee my beautiful boy? never hear his ſweet voice?—Oh Montreville, have pity on me! reſtore my child! I will forgive and pray for thee!"

"You rave, Magdalena—I cannot reſtore."

"Oh!" ſhrieked Magdalena, ſeizing one of the piſtols, "cannot!——"

"It is loaded!" cried Mrs. Montreville, flying out of the room.

Mr. Montreville caught the deſperate hand which held the fatal weapon bent on ſelf-deſtruction;—in the ſtruggle the piſtol turned, and went off; the Earl groaned, and fell from his chair; Magdalena, ſtiff with horror, dropped at his feet—and thus ended her melancholy narrative.

The next morning the Earl was conſidered as drawing near his diſſolution, and Magdalena paſſed it at the feet of her crucifix. Not ſo the fair Mrs. Montreville; ſhe flew to the Palazza Pitti, where ſhe diſplayed her grief, her eloquence, and her beauty, with ſuch effect, that a perſon, high in the confidence of the Grand Duke, related the aggravated ſtory to the

Sovereign, and procured an order for the impriſonment of Magdalena, which, but from the timely notice of Lord Vallerton, would have been executed.

Though the high-fouled Magdalena now trembled at the guilty deſperation, that would have ruſhed, unbidden, before the Creator, ſhe feared not to die;—but to be condemned as a criminal, on the evidence of people intereſted in her deſtruction; to diſhonour her noble family, and ſtamp diſgrace on the name of the brave Admiral, her father, by an ignominious death; to leave her ſon, if yet he lived, an unpitied orphan, was terrible; yet ſuch was the clamour raiſed againſt her, and ſuch her predicament as a foreigner, whom the Engliſh Miniſter could not protect, every thing was to be dreaded, if the Earl, as was hourly expected, ſhould die.

The Duke and Lady Elinor were incapable of any efforts, ſo affected were they with her danger;—Lord Vallerton, however, was too ſolicitous to obtain the approbation of the fair Elinor, and too much intereſted for the innocent ſtranger, to remain inactive.

A yacht always awaited his Lordſhip's commands at Leghorn; there was not a moment to loſe; he put her into his Engliſh chaiſe, and, attended by his own ſervants, had proceeded near two miles before the officers of juſtice demanded her at the Duke of Athelane's reſidence.

Lord Vallerton recommended Magdalena to the Captain in the ſtrongeſt terms; ſhe was attended by a Scots

Scots woman from the *ſuite* of the Duke, and he had the pleaſure to ſee the yacht out of reach of purſuit, before he returned with the welcome tidings to Lady Elinor, whoſe ſmile,

"Through a ſea of liquid pearl,"

was his rich reward.

As the Duke had no ſuſpicion the order for Magdalena's impriſonment could proceed from thoſe to whom her innocence was ſo well known, he haſtened to inform the penitent, and, as he thought him, dying Earl, both of her danger and eſcape: the joyful emotion the news inſpired was unaffected; it broke an abſceſs on his liver, which, contrary to hope, he had ſtrength to throw up, and from that hour he gradually recovered. The wound, which, independent of other ſymptoms, was not dangerous, healed, and the good Duke began to rejoice in the hope of ſeeing him again re-united to his amiable wife.

But Thyrſis the ſick, and Thyrſis the well, were never more diſtinct perſonages; the traits of remorſe, and profeſſions of reformation, which juſtice wrung from the Earl when he thought himſelf "at the awful moment, when all men ſpeak truth," vaniſhed before the faſcinating and tender glances of Mrs. Montreville's bewitching eyes, like a beautiful froſt-work, raiſed under the keen blaſt of winter, which diſſolves and diſappears before the morning ſun-beam; not even the news, which overwhelmed the Duke and his daughter with affliction, that the yacht, which had

had orders to land Magdalena at Leith, had been wrecked on the Scotch coaſt, and every ſoul periſhed, had power to weaken the charm which infatuated him during the remainder of his ſhort life.

The Duke was diſguſted, and, ſpite of the ſyren, the Earl aſhamed. Mrs. Montreville ſoon after diſcovered the climate of Naples would be more congenial to his ſtate of health than that of Florence. He accordingly removed thither *to die*; and his corpſe was brought to Ireland, and buried with great funeral pomp.

Lady Gauntlet, triumphing in the ſucceſs of her ſchemes, became Counteſs of Gauntlet; and though, after ſome time, when ſhe met Lady Elinor Athelane, firſt as Lady Vallerton, afterwards as Counteſs of Denningcourt, ſhe had felt, in the marked diſguſt with which the indiſpenſible compliments were received and paid by that lady, both at Court and in private houſes, that ſhe perfectly remembered every occurrence at Florence; yet as recollections, unſupported by proofs, could neither un-counteſs nor rob her of the adoration her beauty excited, ſhe affected to admire the woman whom, though it was impoſſible ſhe could like, ſhe had the leſs reaſon to fear, as Lord Denningcourt was too polite to recur to an event ſo diſagreeable both to her Lord and herſelf.

But when the ſon of that unhappy mother, whoſe memory Lady Denningcourt cheriſhed with equal affection and reſpect, appeared to claim his rights, under

der the ſanction of his venerable grandfather, then it was that the Counteſs of Gauntlet began to fear the exactitude of her recollections; and though the Duke, to whom the late Earl had avowed his marriage, was no more, the aſſertions of his daughter, whether competent or not in a court of law, would receive ſuch full credit in the world, as muſt injure her in the opinion of thoſe reſpectable perſons on whom ſhe had hitherto ſo artfully practiſed, as to be herſelf, and to make them what ſhe pleaſed.

This was a reflection, to which the detected treachery of Sir Solomon Muſhroom, and the teaſings of her couſin Whittal, were but ſubordinate vexations; and ſhe had already half ſuggeſted a ſcheme to eſcape part of the ignominy due to her nefarious practice.—If ſhe and the good Earl, her huſband, could by any means eſcape the ſtorm themſelves, they had no objection to ſee it burſt in thunder on their colleague; and were actually meditating on the means, when, behold! from the world of waters, another and more damning witneſs raiſed to complete their overthrow and confuſion.

The ſolicitor employed by the Earl, ſent them the aſtoniſhing and unexpected intelligence, that the daughter of Admiral Herbert, the mother of their young adverſary, was living, and actually at the ſeat of the former, whither ſhe had been conducted by Mr. Adderly; and ſcarce had they peruſed this unwelcome note, before a ſecond arrived, with the as

little expected account, that the clergyman who married the late Earl was alſo found near the ſame place.

There was no longer time for deliberation; the Counteſs immediately began to act.

Convinced that all would be diſcovered in a proceſs at law, ſhe reſolved not to abide the event of a trial.

Her couſin Whittal was the only perſon who could, even on hear-ſay evidence, prove the Earl or herſelf privy to carrying off the young Lord; and though that young man was in the prettieſt train of pleaſure imaginable, he had ſenſe enough to know, that a ſecret in poſſeſſion of half a ſcore lawyers was not worth a thirteener; he therefore faithfully promiſed to take the very firſt opportunity of poſſeſſing himſelf of his appointment, for the very ſtriking reaſon, that if that were loſt, he could not get another.

Having ſecured this point, her Ladyſhip, in the greateſt diſtreſs, revealed what ſhe choſe ſhould be a ſtatement of her ſituation to all her powerful friends, proteſting her own innocence, lamenting the fraud which the Earl had unknowingly been guilty of, and declaring their mutual reſolution to reſign the title and eſtate the hour the claimant's legitimacy was proved, though it would reduce her to the moſt extreme diſtreſs.

Diſtreſs! Lady Gauntlet! the beautiful, divine Lady Gauntlet diſtreſſed! abominable! ſhocking! it was

was an affair of more than national conſequence, and muſt be prevented.

Theſe warm friends of Lady Gauntlet were not very famous for penetration, nor much reſpected for the morality of their characters; but they had what was preferable to either, great intereſt; they ſtruck every body, who choſe to hear them, dumb with admiration, of the honour, the generoſity, the juſtice, and humility of the beautiful Counteſs. Such able advocates, indeed, did they prove themſelves, that a penſion on the eſtabliſhment of her own country for life, an additional appointment of honour and profit for the Earl, with a continuation of all his Court employments, and, finally, but that not immediately, the rank of Peereſs in her own right was actually promiſed.

Sir Solomon Muſhroom having in the meanwhile received a moſt haughty rejection of his niece, his money, and his *proofs*, he viſited the Earl, with his gall inflated with revenge; and as Lord Denningcourt [illegible] flown entirely off, the Counteſs conſidered that her friends could command every thing but money; that this was what ſhe could not poſſibly do without, and that ſhe knew of no other poſſible means of procuring it, ſo ſhe agreed that her Lord ſhould renew the old idea of uniting the families.

Sir Solomon made certain that he held the fate of the Earl of Gauntlet in his own boſom; and as he reſolved to be true himſelf, agreed his niece and

eighty thouſand pounds ſhould be Lord Delworth's. The Counteſs, on her part, who having once laid a load of guilt on his ſhoulders to her friends, could not, and remembering his offences, would not retract, meditated many ways of mortifying him, beſides that of informing him, the day after his niece's marriage, that he had not bought a coronet for her, nor ſecured his own character.

How could Lady Gauntlet, or any other lady with ſo many affairs on her head, and ſucceſsful in all, exiſt without a confidant of ſome ſort? and who ſo properly qualified for the honourable office as Mrs. Woudbe? a lady, whoſe delicacy and moral rectitude were put on and off with infinitely leſs trouble than her *rouge*;—not that the Counteſs was ſo unmindful of the reſpect due to herſelf, as to own her guilt to one as guilty—no, it was the triumph and revenge that could not be well enjoyed, without being alſo a little talked of; it was, indeed, principally to gratify the latter paſſion that ſhe took Roſa to Delworth, with ſo many advantages of perſon and ornament; nay, to mortify the Muſhrooms, ſhe would not have been diſpleaſed to ſee the coronet ſhe could no longer wear herſelf, deck the brows of the Beggar.

When, however, Mrs. Woudbe, after complimenting her on the policy of her arrangement in the uſual lady-like way, exchanged ſecret for ſecret, what muſt have been her beautiful Ladyſhip's aſtoniſhment

to

to find in her confidant the perſon deſtined to ſucceed her in her title and home!

Mrs. Woudbe being in the ſtage-box at the play, without her huſband (no uncommon thing), was ſo diſturbed by a quarrel between ſome young bloods behind, that it obliged her, in common decency, to faint; and being taken great care of by a handſome young man, her heart, for the at leaſt fiftieth time, rebelled againſt her liege lord, in his favour.

As this Adonis wore a cockade, he was of courſe, a Captain—as long as he pleaſed—and the event proved him more moderate than many of his ſort; for he laid down his Captainſhip before it laid down him, and announced himſelf Horace Montreville, only ſon of the late Earl of Gauntlet, plaintiff in a ſuit in chancery now pending between him and the preſent Earl; and indeed made his title out ſo clear, and was in poſſeſſion of ſo many family anecdotes, that no doubt could be entertained of his identity and ſucceſs.

Every body, who has the felicity to appeal to the wiſe laws of this realm, and the honeſt men who make it the buſineſs of their lives to underſtand them, will know, that though *Magna Charta* may do much, money will do much more—even Counſellor Firebrand will not open his mouth for or againſt, or, as it often happens, both for *and* againſt, without a fee; and no juſtice or injuſtice can be had in the courts of law without money:—no wonder therefore, that, in a cauſe

cauſe of ſuch magnitude, the wronged heir of a Britiſh Peer ſhould ſtand in particular need of aſſiſtance from his friends.

Mrs. Woudbe greatly aſſiſted him both in money and jewels; but though, conſidering the compact between them, which ſecured to her a ſhare of all advantages, this was no more than fair, ſhe did not impart it to her friend the Counteſs. As to the mode by which her elevation was to be accompliſhed, though it may be inconvenient to little folks, nothing can be more common, faſhionable, or regular in ſucceſſion, among the *haut ton*, than an intrigue, a diſcovery, a divorce, and a marriage; which brings the parties into a ſituation to begin again, and ſo on, *ad libitum*.

Lady Gauntlet, who valued herſelf on fine acting, had acted ſenſibility ſo well with Roſa, and was ſo well pleaſed with the grateful attachment to her perſon and intereſt, which that acting excited, that nothing leſs than what now happened could have ſo completely changed her ſentiments and conduct.

Having indulged her paſſion for Lord Denningcourt, which ſhe had alſo acted into reality, at a time and place when no other paſſion was in its way, which had never before been the caſe, and finding it returned with the moſt provoking coldneſs and neglect, her Ladyſhip found herſelf in a diſpoſition to act, to the life, all the extravagance of a diſappointed woman, before the ſame good creature, who loſt her character

by

by waiting on poor Kattie Buhanun, after having lived four years a very uſeful ſervant to the Counteſs, added jealouſy to her other mortifications, by acquainting her, as before-mentioned, that Miſs Walſingham paſſed the night at the caſtle. This information was followed by two natural concluſions:—Lord Denningcourt could not be leſs charming in other eyes than her's; and he could not have been cold to her, without an attachment to ſome other object;—and a concluſion, more natural than either, was, that the Counteſs of Gauntlet moſt cordially deteſted her rival.

CHAP. V.

Women of Faſhion nonpluſed—the Beggar firſt talks out of all Reaſon, and then is run away with—a common Cauſe and Effect among modern Miſſes.

ROSA obeyed the haughty mandate delivered by Mrs. Modely, and followed her to the beſt drawing-room, which, in honour of the company, was already lighted up.

How

How changed were the politics of the lady of the manſion, ſince ſhe felt a moſt dear pleaſure in anticipating the mortification Sir Solomon Muſhroom and his fair nieces would feel on meeting Roſa under her roof, with every advantage of perſon and dreſs, and every appearance of happineſs.

But the difference was—ſhe then conſidered her as rivalling *them*; ſhe now felt her rivalling *herſelf*.

The whole family of the Gauntlets, the Earl excepted, Sir Solomon Muſhroom, his niece, Mrs. Feverſham, Lady Louiſa, and Mr. Brudenel, were, in appearance, aſſembled to witneſs the humiliation of Roſa.

Sir Solomon ſat in great ſtate on the right of the Counteſs; Mrs. Feverſham on the left; Miſs Muſhroom, elegantly attired, was arranging ſome beautiful flowers for a *bouquet*, with her lover agreeably trifling by her ſide; the Major and Lady Louiſa on an oppoſite ſofa; the three young ladies, Madame Roſette, and Mr. Brudenel, with a *port-feuille*, before them, though not looked at after Roſa's entrance, who, not expecting ſuch an aſſembly of elegance, and dazzled by the lights, felt confuſed, and drew back.

The fatigue ſhe had undergone, her hair blown out of all order by the evening breeze in her walk through Denningcourt park, her ruſty black habit, and faint look, formed a contraſt ſufficiently gratifying to thoſe who envied, or who hated her.

Lady

Lady Gauntlet glanced her eye over her whole figure with an expreſſion of rancour it was impoſſible for Roſa to underſtand.

"My God!" cried Mrs. Feverſham, "can this be Miſs Walſingham?—I proteſt it is, and in her old ruſty black habit. Why, Lord! I vow I thought Lord Denningcourt had you in keeping at the frightful old caſtle yonder. I am glad you was not ſuch a fool; but pray, have you worn that ſhabby habit ever ſince?"

Again Lady Gauntlet's eye ſhot beams of indignation at Roſa as ſhe ſlowly advanced.

"Stop where you are, Miſs," ſaid ſhe, with the air of a Ruſſian Empreſs. "Dear Sir Solomon, how ſhall I apologize to you, or my ſweet Charlotte, for having (notwithſtanding I might have known, that had this girl been worthy my protection, your's would not have been withheld) been ſo prepoſſeſſed in her favour by that artful wretch, Lord Denningcourt?"

"Artful!" cried Mrs. Feverſham, happening to caſt her eyes on the pretty bracelets he had himſelf firſt put on her arm—"well, I declare, I never heard he had that character;—but, to be ſure, he is vaſtly handſome—has the fineſt perſon, and whiteſt teeth, of any man of faſhion I ever ſaw."

Lord Delworth and the Major bowed.

"Preſent company, you know, gentlemen."

"You are vaſtly polite, Ma'am;" and Miſs Muſhroom's ſeat grew uneaſy.

"Polite!

"Polite! I hope I am not unpolite, Miſs; I think I ought to know how to behave in *any* company."

Sir Solomon, to whom theſe ſpars, though familiar, were not very agreeable, begged Lady Gauntlet would proceed.

"Lord Denningcourt's fine perſon and white teeth," reſumed her Ladyſhip, "ſeem to have made a ſtronger impreſſion on Mrs. Feverſham than I confeſs they ever did on me."

Mrs. Feverſham might be piqued into a talking fit, but never into a ſilent one;—ſhe was ſorry for that—it was not her fault, nor Lord Denningcourt's.

"It might poſſibly be her's," her Ladyſhip coldly ſaid; but to leave his Lordſhip's perfections, ſhe confeſſed herſelf to have forgotten the reſpect due to her own character, as well as her friend Sir Solomon Muſhroom, when ſhe took a low artful perſon under her protection, and recommended her to one of the beſt women in the world as her companion.

Roſa recovered from her confuſion in an inſtant.

"Mrs. Woudbe—you know Mr. Woudbe, Sir Solomon, of Portman-ſquare, a man of immenſe fortune?"

"We were at a maſked ball there with the Counteſs, uncle."

"I remember it perfectly; Mr. Woudbe is a member of our houſe, I believe; I think I have heard him ſpeak very well—vaſtly well."

That Sir Solomon could not remember, for it had not happened—Mr. Woudbe not being a ſenator; but the miſtake added to the reſpectability of the Woudbes; it was therefore ſuffered to paſs; and her Ladyſhip proceeded."

"My poor friend! we are deprived of the pleaſure of her company by an indiſpoſition, brought on by this girl's abandoned conduct."

Roſa's perſon roſe with her mind; ſhe looked down on the beautiful Counteſs.

"Mrs. Woudbe—Woudbe—ſure I have heard enough of her to doubt her being ſo much affected at another perſon's conduct, who was never aſhamed of her own; ſure your Ladyſhip is quizzing all this while."

"Mrs. Feverſham, I am ſhocked at you."

"I am ſorry for that, my dear; becauſe you are then preciſely in Mrs. Woudbe's ſituation, feeling that concern for your friend, you have more need of for yourſelf."

"Lord, Ma'am, there is no talking to you."

"Then don't attempt it, my dear. But pray, my Lady, what has this poor girl done that has ſo affected Mrs. Woudbe?"

Mrs. Feverſham would talk, right or wrong; and when once ſhe fancied herſelf attacked, as ſhe called it, dealt her wit about with ſo little delicacy or reſpect to perſons, that Lady Gauntlet was, ſtrange to tell, a little embarraſſed.

"I am really aſhamed to ſay what ſhe has done;—but what would you ſay, Mrs. Feverſham, if, in a family like mine, a young perſon ſhould abſent herſelf, and paſs the night under the roof of ſuch a man as Lord Denningcourt?"

"Say! I declare I hardly know what I ſhould ſay, more than what I before ſaid on the ſame ſubject, that it would be very fooliſh."

"Would it not affect *you*?"

"Not much; for Miſs Walſingham——"

"Walſingham! Lord, Ma'am, you really are too bad; I dare ſay you know her name well enough."

"If ſhe does," ſaid Sir Solomon, "it is more than I do."

"Sir Solomon!" Lady Gauntlet was ſurpriſed.

"Uncle means her real name; for though Colonel Buhanun gave her leave to aſſume his, nobody but our village doctor knew that of her mother."

"Buhanun!" exclaimed Mrs. Feverſham; "why ſure this can't be! and yet—let me look at you, child;—yes, now I recollect it is—it muſt—there is not ſuch another face in the world;—how could I forget it!—it is the little Beggar. Lord! I never ſhall forget how like an angel I thought ſhe looked when I ſaw her at Mount Pleaſant;—but how come you to change your name? that has a bad—a very bad look.

"A trifle," Lady Gauntlet ſaid, "in compariſon of other matters; but to expoſe the atrocity of her conduct,

conduct, was only a juſt penance for her own credulity, and an atonement for the little reſpect the countenancing her at all implied to the opinion of her good friend, Sir Solomon Muſhroom."

That was the only part of the buſineſs at which Sir Solomon Muſhroom was at all ſurpriſed; for as to the poor girl, what could be expected from her? She was taken from the loweſt ſtate of beggary, made a fine lady, and then deſerted;—the vices of her parents were natural, and of conſequence permanent; the airs of gentility acquired, and, of courſe, ſuperficial;—he was ſorry for her, but could not perſuade perſons of her Ladyſhip's rank, and of Mrs. Woudbe's reſpectability, to countenance an unhappy creature of her deſcription;—but perhaps, gentlemen, you will not object to a ſmall collection for the poor girl—my one pound one is ready."

"By no means," cried the Major, jumping on his feet; and after toſſing his guinea into his hat, handed it to Lord Delworth, who generouſly followed his example; and having alſo collected Sir Solomon's *one pound one*, he offered the magnificent aggregate to Roſa, who, without a trait of paſſion on her countenance, calmly adviſed him to keep the money himſelf, as the foundation of a fund to anſwer the future exigencies of his own family.

Lady Gauntlet, ſecure in her own proſpects, anſwered this ſarcaſm with "Poor thing!"

"Have you any further commands for me, Lady Gauntlet?" ſaid Roſa, without deigning to notice her pity.

"Are you preſſed for time, Miſs?—one viſit a day is ſurely enough at that delightful caſtle;—conſider, one may be ſurfeited with ſweets."

"It may be for your Ladyſhip's intereſt to conſider that; but if you have no further commands——"

Roſa had with great innocence made this ſtinging retort; Lady Gauntlet coloured.

Miſs Muſhroom was aſtoniſhed at her aſſurance.

Madame Roſette, with the young ladies, withdrew; and the Rev. Mr. Brudenel was on his legs to turn the bold creature out of the room; but as Roſa was haughtily ſaving him any trouble, Lady Gauntlet called to her to ſtop, and bid him ſhut the door.

"I have yet ſo much compaſſion, ſo much, that I—I would prevent your utter ruin;—I have ordered my chaiſe to convey you the firſt ſtage towards London, and a ſervant to go with you ſtill further—Your things are ready, I hear."

"A very handſome offer!" cried Mrs. Feverſham.

Her Ladyſhip was too good, Miſs Muſhroom was ſure.

Lady Gauntlet conſidered every body, the Rev. Mr. Brudenel ſaid.

Sir

Sir Solomon wiſhed ſhe might not repent it; for his part he knew enough of the diſpoſition of ſuch ſort of wretches to expect inſult for benefit.

Roſa was at firſt ſtruck with the offer; and had not Lady Gauntlet's manner of ſpeaking of her *poor friend*, and the occaſion of her illneſs, ſteeled her heart, ſhe might perhaps have allowed her part of the credit ſhe gave herſelf; ſince, as the matter ſtood, her abſence and ſtay at Denningcourt certainly wanted elucidation; and it was not an abſurd concluſion, as ſhe had perhaps been ſeen going towards Denningcourt park, that ſhe had again viſited the caſtle. But there was alſo another objection to her immediate removal from the neighbourhood; her heart was ſtrongly bent on attending Elinor; the Duke's laſt words impelled her to hope ſhe would be admitted into the family at the jointure-houſe—he had promiſed ſhe ſhould hear from them, and, in the preſent diſpoſition of her mind, ſhe would as ſoon have doubted holy writ as his word;—nothing therefore could prevail on her to leave the neighbourhood till her fiat was pronounced from them.

"Are you dumb, Miſs?" cried the Counteſs, riſing with an exceſs of paſſion ſhe could neither reſtrain nor conceal, though evidently wiſhing to do both.

"No, Madam," replied Roſa; "I am willing to think you mean me a favour; but——"

"But what?—Your hankering is after your ſeducer—you will not accept my offer."

"Not to-night, Madam."

"Not till you have apprized Lord Denningcourt;—but you ſhall neither ſee nor ſend to him; I will confine you; you ſhall live on bread and water, nor ſhall a creature in the houſe dare to ſpeak to you."

"Confine me! this is really ſuch an outrageous defence of my honour, Lady Gauntlet, as, conſidering every thing, would alarm me, if I did not know you. I am not to learn, Madam, that to confine me is more than you dare do."

If Sir Solomon was in Lady Gauntlet's ſituation, he would dare do any thing he pleaſed.

"You have given me a noble proof of your daring already, Sir Solomon."

"How ſo, woman—what doſt mean?"

"That you have done what no gentleman will *dare* to do—falſified your own word."

"'Tis falſe; my word is as good as the bank."

"Is it, Sir? I thought you promiſed to protect me; and there are thoſe who know you might have kept that promiſe without injury to yourſelf."

"Lord, if ever I heard any thing to equal this!" ſaid Miſs Muſhroom to her lover, in a tone of alarm; "I declare ſhe is going to be impertinent to my uncle now!"

"Let her take care," roared Sir Solomon, in a voice that had often made Roſa tremble.

"Well,

"Well, the girl is really clever and ſpirited," ſaid Mrs. Feverſham, "and the more I look at her, the more I think ſhe reſembles what I was a few years back; but come, child, Lady Gauntlet knows the world better than you, or even me; remember the old chandler-woman, the watchmen, my ear-rings, and the caricature of a Juſtice; there are ſuch bodies all over the world; and you may chance to meet them where there are no Lord Denningcourts; take my advice, accept the offer her Ladyſhip makes."

Roſa thanked her; but added, as ſhe was a ſtranger to every part of her ſituation, excepting the beggary of her origin, and the accident ſhe alluded to, it was impoſſible for her to judge on the fit or unfit. "I am ready," ſhe added, "to quit Delworth."

"And return to Denningcourt, abandoned wretch!"

"Dear Madam," ſaid Lady Louiſa, "what is it to us where ſhe goes? we can only pity and adviſe her; if ſhe be inſenſible and ungrateful, ſhe will ſuffer; but why ſhould our preſent happineſs be ſacrificed to her folly?"

Lord Delworth ſeconded his ſiſter; and Miſs Muſhroom, with ſome difficulty, ſqueezed out a tear.

Lady Gauntlet's fine features re-aſſumed the aſpect of placid goodneſs: ſhe embraced her future daughter-in-law, aſked the pardon of the company, and even apologized to her children; but inſiſted, nevertheleſs,

that Roſa ſhould not be ſuffered to ſtir, at leaſt till Mrs. Woudbe diſcharged her.

"Mrs. Woudbe!" repeated Roſa; "ſhe declined to ſee me, and can have no buſineſs——"

"No buſineſs! were you not entruſted with her jewels?"

"Jewels! does ſhe charge *me* with any breach of that truſt?"

Lady Gauntlet had gone further than ſhe intended. "It is, however, proper ſhe ſhould diſcharge you."

"Nothing more ſo," Sir Solomon ſaid; "and if ſhe made any more words about the matter, he was of the quorum, and he, or indeed my Lord, if he acted, might commit her."

"Commit me, Sir!"

"Yes, Madam, to priſon—the county gaol—wherever that is."

"*Can* you, Sir? then God help me, for I am ſure you *will!*"

Roſa had hitherto borne up with ſpirit; but though ſhe had never been more ſenſible of the ſupport of conſcious innocence, the laſt threat terrified her:—the idea of ſtanding quite alone in the world, at the mercy of Sir Solomon Muſhroom, Mrs. Woudbe, and their ſort, and at laſt, perhaps, be ſent to priſon, was too much: ſhe endeavoured in vain to conceal her emotion, as ſhe ſlowly retreated from the preſence ſhe was beginning to fear, when a ſervant entered, breathleſs with

with haſte and ſurpriſe, to announce the Duke of Athelane.

The Counteſs, guilt-ſtruck, leaned back in her chair—forgetting, in that moment, the Duke of Athelane, whom ſhe feared, had no longer the power to confront her.

Lady Louiſa, who was perfectly well-bred, advanced with Lord Delworth to the Duke.

Mrs. Feverſham was all eyes, Sir Solomon all bows, and Miſs Muſhroom reſumed her flowers.

Roſa was near the door, gazing with anxious hope at the Duke, whoſe figure, as he paſſed her, looked more than mortal; but when the firſt compliments were over, Sir Solomon and his party, Mr. Brudenel, and Lady Louiſa introduced, and every body ſeated, finding herſelf ſtill ſtanding unnoticed, or even ſeeming to be ſeen, ſhe retreated nearer the door, her heart flowing from her eyes.

With Lady Gauntlet's recollection, her eaſy eloquence returned; ſhe complimented the Duke, enquired after the ladies of the family, and was all again the graceful infatuating Counteſs of Gauntlet.

In this moment, to the ſurpriſe of more than one of the party, Mrs. Woudbe entered in an elegant diſhabille: ſhe had really fretted herſelf ill; but having no particular diſeaſe, ſhe could not lie on bed all day and all night, and her own company was terrible; but as nobody choſe to ſhare the inſupportable burthen with her, and as ſhe heard the Duke of Athelane

was in the drawing-room, ſhe reſolved to join the company, ſecretly exclaiming, "Oh! if I had my dear jewels again, I would think no more of the traitor."

The invalid bruſhed by Roſa with tolerable force, conſidering her weak ſtate; and Sir Solomon immediately reſigned his chair to the wife of the man of immenſe fortune.

The Duke, after a pauſe, confeſſed himſelf at a loſs to apologize for intruding on Lady Gauntlet a viſit ſo out of all order.

The Duke of Athelane, Lady Gauntlet ſaid, could never be an intruder.

Again the Duke pauſed.

"You have heard, Lady Gauntlet, I preſume, how much we are all affected by the indiſpoſition of a young relation?"

"Certainly, my Lord Duke," ſaid Mrs. Feverſham, full of ſelf-collection, and proud of the eaſe with which ſhe could ſpeak to a nobleman of the firſt rank, even when not ſpoken to, "every body has heard of poor Lady Denningcourt's misfortune; and as every body knows ſhe is one of the very beſt women in the world, why every body pities her monſtrouſly. I ſuppoſe you have had Doctor Willis?"

"Now," joined Mrs. Woudbe, "I think I ſhould prefer Monro; you know he attends Bedlam, and therefore——"

The Duke was thunderſtruck: he wiſhed to have kept the unhappy malady a profound ſecret; and having commanded the domeſtics to be dumb on the matter, concluded they were ſo—as to the heads of the family, they were not to be doubted;—but here were inconteſtible proofs that it had furniſhed chit chat for half the idlers of the age, and would certainly, even if Elinor was cured, be either an impediment to his grand plan, or a diſgrace to it; he could not immediately recover this painful conviction, and therefore did not anſwer.

Lady Gauntlet, who was the eſſence of fine breeding, was as much ſhocked at the vulgar forwardneſs of both ladies as the Duke himſelf, but could not, without adopting their manners, apologize for them.

After a ſhort ſilence, the Duke addreſſed Mrs. Woudbe:—"You have a young lady under your protection, Madam, who is the motive of my intruſion on Lady Gauntlet?"

"Walſingham," Mrs. Woudbe preſumed, vainly endeavouring to conceal her confuſion under an air of haughty contempt.

"My dear Woudbe," cried Lady Gauntlet, in a tone of conſolation, "do not let it affect you—think of her as ſhe deſerves; you have been too good—ſhe, worthleſs and ungrateful—there is nothing ſo extraordinary in either caſe."

Extraordinary! no, Sir Solomon thought, with humble ſubmiſſion to his Grace, nothing was more common; for his part, he ſcarce ever remembered doing a charitable act, without having dirt thrown in his teeth for it, which was the reaſon why he had left off charity.

The Duke looked both diſguſted and ſurpriſed. "I ſhall be extremely diſappointed," ſaid he, "if I am to underſtand, by all this, that the young lady's conduct has wounded the ſenſibility of her patroneſs, and provoked ſo dirty a philippic againſt one of the cardinal virtues from that gentleman."

Nobody better underſtood the dangerous weapon of irony than Lady Gauntlet; and though extremely vulnerable to its wound, and nicely ſenſible to its attack, the conſtant guard on her feelings never betrayed her ſecret vexation. The cauſe of her friend was now her own, and without affecting to have heard what had paſſed, ſhe directed the brilliant, yet melting languor of her fine eyes, to the Duke.

"Mrs. Woudbe, my Lord, was ſo attached to this unworthy——"

"She really is unworthy, then?"

"As ſhe has been an inmate of my houſe, under the roof with my daughters, and often my companion, though never their's, I am aſhamed to ſay how much ſo."

Miſs Muſhroom's hint now ſent Lord Delworth acroſs the room to inform Roſa ſhe might retire—he

ſuppoſed

ſuppoſed the Counteſs would ſend for her when ſhe was wanted; but though he waited a moment, ſhe neither anſwered, nor took his hint.

The Duke's looks betrayed his chagrin; Mrs. Woudbe underſtood her cue was to affect ſenſibility, and took out her handkerchief; Lady Gauntlet darted an indignant glance at the ſtubborn Roſa, who kept her ſtation, undiſmayed.

"I am," ſaid the Duke, "in a very delicate predicament. The young perſon was, we find, a juvenile friend of our young relation: ſhe paſſed Lady Denningcourt's houſe, we think, by accident; Miſs Athelane ſaw and recollected her;—we expected, after a compoſing medicine, which the gentleman who attends her thought neceſſary, ſhe would have forgotten the incident; but we find, what we conſider as a very favourable omen, her recollection quite clear; ſhe calls inceſſantly for her friend; and really I was ſo much prepoſſeſſed——"

"You have ſeen her, Duke?"

"The incident was ſo ſudden and unexpected, it affected them both ſo much, there was no avoiding that; but though I muſt confeſs her manner and perſon ſtruck me ſo much——"

Mrs. Feverſham did not wonder at that; it ſtruck every body.

"There are certain delicacies in our ſituation," reſumed the Duke, "which render an inquiry into her

her character and connexions neceſſary, before we can reſolve to indulge our dear invalid."

His good Grace was perfectly right, Sir Solomon ſaid;—caution, in ſuch caſe, was the proof of wiſdom. The ladies, he added, were tender; but for his part, he thought it incumbent on every man of *character* to be frank, and therefore he muſt take the liberty to be their orator on this occaſion. The girl's character was notorious, and her connexion ſuch, as it would not ſurpriſe him to hear had lightened the ſideboard.

The Duke was aſtoniſhed. "But how," ſaid he, "could ſuch a perſon get introduced to Lady Gauntlet?"

Her Ladyſhip aroſe: ſhe had ſome fine exotics in an adjoining apartment, which ſhe wiſhed to ſhew his Grace.

The Duke alſo aroſe, and was leading her towards the door, when Roſa ruſhed forward, the colour of her complexion varying with every breath.

The Counteſs would have paſſed, but the Duke made an involuntary ſtop.

"Lord, if ever I ſaw any thing ſo bold and impertinent in my life!" cried Miſs Charlotte.

Lady Louiſa, conceiving her mother inſulted, whiſpered Mr. Brudenel, who immediately inſiſted on Roſa's quitting the preſence of the Counteſs; but had he ſpoken in thunder, ſhe would neither have heard nor regarded it.

"I adjure you, Sir," ſaid ſhe, addreſſing the Duke, "by the honour which, I am ſure, is in *you* more than lip deep, to hear all that can be ſaid of me in my own preſence, and let me anſwer for myſelf."

"Well, I love her ſpirit," cried Mrs. Feverſham; "it is ſo like my own."

"'Tis an evil ſpirit, and ought to be laid," cried the Major.

"Will your Grace do me the honour to ſee my exotics;" and the Counteſs extended the white hand he had relinquiſhed.

"Stop, Sir," ſaid Roſa; "I once more adjure you, as one of the ineſtimable props on which the fine harmony of ſocial juſtice depends: I do not now wiſh to avail myſelf of the favourable ſentiments you profeſſed for me when we parted; I no longer implore you to gain me admiſſion under Lady Denningcourt's roof: I am the offspring of a beggar—an outcaſt;—let the obloquy of my origin glare on every event of my exiſtence; let me meet the contempt of little minds, and endure the hardſhips of that poverty which is my birthright; but no longer let me be loaded with guilt, from which my ſoul is free; attach not crimes to the name of beggar, which thoſe of a ſuperior rank only dare commit with impunity. Too long have my feelings been lacerated by the injuſtice of thoſe who deſpiſe the beggary they want ſoul to relieve; too long has patient endurance, and the hope that travels with us through life, ſanctioned the calumny

lumny which purſues me. I have heard myſelf accuſed on prejudice, and condemned on ſurmiſe; but I appeal from vulgar error, from miſrepreſentations and perſecution, to a nobleman, in whom I will believe, that honour and nobility are ſynonimous—not for favour, but juſtice. If I be proved only unfortunate, I cannot fear admiſſion to the jointure-houſe, for Lady Denningcourt's is the aſylum of the miſerable; if guilty, I am unworthy of breathing the ſame atmoſphere with her;—by my own actions, ſuch as they have been, I am ready to ſtand or fall."

"We ſhall ſee," cried Mrs. Feverſham.

The Duke's eyes were riveted on the animated ſpeaker. "I wiſh," ſaid he, "you may be wronged, though I muſt hope this company incapable of falſe accuſation."

"Will your Grace ſee the exotics?"

The Duke heſitated. "What have *you* to ſay?" turning from Lady Gauntlet to Roſa.

"What I have before ſaid, Sir—that I deſire, I demand to hear the anſwers to thoſe inquiries, it certainly becomes you to make, into my character and connexions. One virtuous lady is too much affected to ſpeak out; another, after charging me with indelicate and criminal irregularities in the preſence of her own amiable daughters, requires to be alone with a *gentleman*, while ſhe relates my enormities; and Sir Solomon Muſhroom aſſerts, to my face, that my character is notorious. Well, my Lord, you ſee every body

body is ſilent; have I your leave to be my own accuſer?"

"There is a witchcraft about you I cannot reſiſt; but (and the Duke led her towards his own chair) I muſt not ſuffer a lady to ſtand, while one gentleman keeps his ſeat." Yet, with all his politeneſs, there ſtood the divine, the beautiful Counteſs, who, deſerted by a man of quality, found herſelf in a ſituation perfectly new.

The Duke recollected himſelf; he reconducted Lady Gauntlet to her ſeat.

"Then you will not ſee my exotics, Duke?"

"I confeſs myſelf ſpell-bound;—this is an extraordinary girl; is it not poſſible your Ladyſhip may be miſtaken in her? ſhe muſt be very good, or very bad; with ſuch a mind and perſon there can be no medium."

"Lady Gauntlet *is* miſtaken, my Lord; but admitting ſhe were not, if I were the unhappy creature ſhe ſuſpects, ſhould not that rather entitle me to compaſſion?"

"Not when you avow your guilt, and glory in it."

"I have done neither."

"No! not acknowledged being at Denningcourt caſtle all night, when my ſervants were diſpatched every where in ſearch of you?"

"How!" ſaid the Duke—"can this be true?"

Roſa

Roſa anſwered, "It is, my Lord," with what Miſs Muſhroom declared was the moſt unheard-of effrontery.

"At the caſtle! with Denningcourt! then indeed I fear you cannot be wronged. But has he not a woman there?"

This was too fair an opportunity for Mrs. Feverſham to let paſs; ſhe could take on her to ſay, that, to her certain knowledge, and ſhe was ſeldom deceived, Lord Denningcourt had fallen deſperately in love with Miſs Walſingham the very firſt time he had ſeen her.

"In love!" repeated Lady Gauntlet, ſcornfully.

"True as fate, my Lady;—and really, when I heard he had deſerted my dear friend Miſs Muſhroom——"

"Deſerted!" repeated Miſs Muſhroom, colouring with vexation.

"Bleſs me," continued Mrs. Feverſham, "ſure there is an echo here. You know, my dear, he did deſert you; but you could not help that, nor he neither, perhaps. I really thought, when I heard it, and that he had got a miſtreſs with him at his old caſtle, it was Miſs Walſingham; which, as ſhe is ſo beautiful, you know, my Lord, was the moſt natural thing in the world."

"You give me up, Sir, I ſee," ſaid Roſa; "but I warn you againſt haſty concluſions. In reſpect to this caſtle, and this Lord, I ſhall come purified out of the fire."

As

As Lady Gauntlet had her own unanſwerable reaſons for believing that impoſſible, ſhe had great pleaſure in obſerving a degree of ſettled incredulity in the Duke's looks.

"But," continued Roſa, "as, when I ſhewed your Ladyſhip the letter, which proved how I was impoſed on, and for what infamous purpoſe——"

To her utter aſtoniſhment, Lady Gauntlet proteſted the girl was mad, actually mad; ſhe had never ſhewn her any paper or letter to that or any other purport.

Roſa's hands and eyes were uplifted.

"None of your grimaces," roared Sir Solomon; "I ſhall be obliged to commit you at laſt."

"Let us take care not to commit ourſelves, Sir," ſaid the Duke, gravely; "we muſt not intimidate even a guilty pannel on trial."

"Mrs. Woudbe, I do not expect you will accuſe yourſelf; but ſure you won't deny certain letters?"

Mrs. Woudbe did deny the whole ſtory, and defied Roſa to produce a ſingle voucher.

Roſa's colour and her countenance fell; the vouchers were indeed out of her power, as ſhe had returned them all.

The Duke's fine open brow was faſt curling into auſtere ſeverity. "This," ſaid he, "is triffing and abſurd; and what could it benefit you to prove your protectreſs an ill woman? her vices would not excuſe your's."

"No,

"No, to be ſure," joined Mrs. Feverſham; "the ſame ſenſe that enabled you to diſcover the faults of others, ſhould certainly aſſiſt you to correct your own."

The Duke gave Mrs. Feverſham a glance of approbation, of which ſhe was ſo proud, ſhe repeated the ſame ſentence twice over without ſtopping.

"The end I expected it to anſwer, Sir, was not to expoſe the lady you call my protectreſs, but to prove, that inſtead of being diſcarded as a perſon who diſgraced her employers, I was only ſolicitous not to be diſgraced by them; though, as the ladies are witneſſes for each other, and I have certainly reſigned all the——No"—and a glow of deep crimſon covered her face—"no, I have not reſigned *all* the vouchers—here is one;" and ſhe produced the letter ſhe had received from the houſe-maid. "This, I preſume, does not belong to *you*, Madam—it is addreſſed to *me*."

Mrs. Woudbe forgot her invalid ſtate, and ruſhed to ſeize the letter.—"Yes," ſaid ſhe, almoſt ſtifled with her joyful emotion, "it is, it is mine—give it me."

"Is it not addreſſed to me?" anſwered Roſa coldly, putting it into the Duke's hand.

"Dear Miſs Walſingham, but you know it is for me; it is, it is—Oh give it to me!"

Lady Gauntlet was confounded for her friend—ſhe would have whiſpered a different conduct; but beſides

ſides the Duke's, every other eye was fixed on them. An expoſure of Mrs. Woudbe was now inevitable; but, as the Duke juſtly obſerved, that would not exonerate Roſa from the firſt charge, and, in her opinion, nothing elſe could, ſhe had nothing for it but to be ſurpriſed at Mrs. Woudbe, and let her ſink or ſwim, as her good or evil genius preponderated.

"Many of theſe letters, I believe, Madam," reſumed Roſa, "you will not now deny came through my hands, from a diſtreſſed man—your *natural brother*."

"No matter, the letter is *mine*—give it to me."

"Stay, Madam, I think it will be of conſequence to me, that ſome perſon ſhould peruſe this letter on my behalf. Will you, my Lord, have ſo much charity?"

"Firſt, let me know what end the reading is to anſwer."

"None in the world, dear Duke," cried Mrs. Woudbe, "but to ruin me. Would you, Miſs Walſingham, wiſh that? What good would it do you to ruin me?"

"I might have aſked you the ſame queſtion, Madam, a few moments ſince."

"I cannot underſtand this buſineſs, ladies," ſaid the Duke, gravely; "here ſeems to be a ſecret not too honourable, either in the concealment or diſcovery. I muſt beg leave to return the letter; I am by no means expert in the developement of intrigues, and cannot

cannot take ſo curved a mean to diſcover what it cannot import me to know."

"Have a moment's patience, Sir," ſaid Roſa, rather haſtily; "if you be come here to make enquiries about my character and connexions, every thing muſt import you in which either is implicated. I am accuſed of irregularity—to that I plead ſo far guilty, as that it is to you alone I will condeſcend to vindicate myſelf."

"Now that is wrong, very wrong in you," cried Mrs. Feverſham; "becauſe we, who are not of the ſecret, not hearing your juſtification——"

"You have heard me accuſed, Madam, of occaſioning Mrs. Woudbe ill reſt by the enormity of my conduct."

"Certainly, my dear, I muſt have been deaf elſe."

"And you alſo heard me advert to a letter I ſhewed Lady Gauntlet, which——"

"She denied—good."

"Then pray, my Lord Duke, have the goodneſs to read that letter."

"Pray, pray don't, my Lord Duke!—Miſs Walſingham, I acknowledge every thing—I deceived you in reſpect to the perſon by whom the letters were wrote, which came to me under your cover. I beſeech you, my Lord Duke, let me have my letter."

"Did I not by accident diſcover the infamous advantage you took of my ignorance in ſuch iniquitous practices?"

"I certainly

"I certainly confided a caſe of papers to your care, one of which you have read. Surely I am humbled enough—I entreat his Grace will let me have my letter; it is of the laſt importance to me."

"One word more;—do you believe I ſhewed Lady Gauntlet the letter you allude to?"

"I believe—I think——"

"Are you not certain that I did?"

"How can I be ſure of what I did not ſee?"

"Well, Madam, when I ſent you the box with its ſcandalous contents, I wrote a note with it; I would not aſk the Duke to degrade himſelf by reading the paper of ſuch importance to you, if I could convince him I am not unworthy the confidence of Lady Denningcourt without it. Give his Grace that note."

"Lady Gauntlet, dear Lady Gauntlet, you——"

Lady Gauntlet had liſtened with internal rage, while her features only expreſſed curioſity.

Mrs. Woudbe, who had no doubt this letter from her *natural brother* accounted for his ſilence, and that all her ſuſpenſe would be ended the moment it came into her hands, thought no ſacrifice too great to obtain it, while her friend and confidant, who neither expected nor hoped any thing about the matter, was enraged at her committing herſelf, and more ſo at involving her in ſo evident a diſgrace.

"I am aſtoniſhed, Madam," ſaid ſhe, with great haughtineſs, "you can appeal to me on ſo ridiculous a buſineſs;—I know little of your affairs, and leſs of your

your correſpondence; if you have improper ſecrets, and your confidant has betrayed them, I beg I may not be implicated—my honour——"

"Nay, Lady Gauntlet, if you go to that, and talk of honour, I might, perhaps, have as much to—"

"I entreat, ladies," ſaid the Duke, "you will not traverſe the ſcene of Brutus and Caſſius—you are both honourable ladies, no doubt; but if my little Daniel here could bring herſelf ſo well off about her nocturnal viſits at Denningcourt Caſtle, I ſhould be tempted to run away with her."

"She has turned the tables, indeed, my Lord," cried Mrs. Feverſham, "if confidence on one ſide, and confuſion on the other, can do it; but for my part, I like a little ocular demonſtration, and think that the note or the letter ought to be produced, *pro bono publico*. What ſay you, Sir Solomon?"

Sir Solomon had ſeen through the whole buſineſs from the beginning; but as Roſa was an innocent perſon, whom, having injured, he could never forgive, it was but natural he ſhould ſeize, with avidity, every poſſible means of puniſhing her for reminding him of what he found convenient to forget, by remaining among the ſons and daughters of men; and his mortification was always in proportion, when ſhe ſlipped unhurt through his fingers.

Mrs. Feverſham's "what ſay you, Sir Solomon?" was like many other of her ſayings, rather ill-timed; the Knight, not knowing well what anſwer

ſwer he ought to make conſiſtent with his profound reſpect for the lady of the manſion, fixed on that the moſt oppoſite to her ſentiments, and inimical to their mutual intereſt. "To be ſure, after ſo much ſaid on both ſides, proof was what every body expected."

Roſa, in the meanwhile, ſtruck at what the Duke ſaid reſpecting her nocturnal viſit to the caſtle, could not help admitting that the elucidation of ſo ſuſpicious a circumſtance ought to be as public as the occaſion; but Kattie! muſt ſhe ſacrifice the hope of ſeeing her reſtored to ſociety! of concealing her frailty! and changing the artful ſeducer into the honourable protector!—Beſides, had ſhe not ſolemnly promiſed—and could ſhe break a promiſe, made to the diſtreſſed child of her revered and lamented friend?—but was there no medium? would no reſervation be accepted?—ſhe might however try.

During Roſa's reverie, Miſs Muſhroom, having hinted to Lord Delworth that all this vile proſing was vaſtly inſipid, and he being of her opinion, they aroſe, arm in arm, to leave the apartment.

The Major, who never had an opinion of his own, nor adopted that of another without ſome new oath, ſwore he was as tired as nineteen devils, and made one ſtep acroſs the room to join them: Mr. Brudenel was alſo on the move; but Lady Louiſa, who knew more of her mother's real diſpoſition than any other of her children, ſat ſtill, in painful expectation of an unpleaſant ending to ſo extraordinary a ſcene.

Roſa had by this time made up her mind; ſhe entreated the moving party would be ſeated one moment, in a manner ſo gently perſuaſive, that although Miſs Muſhroom put up her under lip with "at her requeſt, indeed! well, that was a famous joke!" ſhe permitted herſelf to be led back to her ſeat; and while the reſt of the company found their attention attracted by Roſa, reſumed her bouquet.

"I am going to try whether you will be tempted, my Lord, to run away with me," ſaid Roſa, with a ſmile, "as you threatened, if I could explain the myſtery of the caſtle. You know there is an unhappy female reſident there?"

"Of whom the Earl," Lady Gauntlet ſaid, "was heartily tired."

"It was a dreadful night, my Lord, and I was ſheltered from the ſtorm, with a friend, where few in this company would chuſe to go by day-light—where indeed I was forced myſelf."

"A riddle-me-ree!" cried Mrs. Feverſham.

"It was in the mauſoleum of the family of the Denningcourts."

"But you had *a friend with you*;" and Lady Gauntlet tried to look into her ſoul.

"I had, Madam; and perhaps Sir Solomon Muſhroom would be more clear of comprehenſion, if I ſaid part of a friend; it was that honeſt cripple, Sir Solomon, John Brown, who was turned out of his own houſe

houſe by his own ſervant;—you remember John Brown, Sir Solomon?"

"My ſtars!" cried Mrs. Feverſham—"what, the old landlord of the White-Horſe, is he alive, after all? why I declare I ſhould not be more ſurpriſed if his old maſter was to pop in among us one of theſe days."

Sir Solomon had a ſick qualm;—the laſt two perſons in the world he wiſhed to meet had been brought to the ſame point in the moſt unfortunate moment, and, in all likelihood, leagued together ever ſince; and, to finiſh the climax, a ſuggeſtion, a bare ſuggeſtion, that his maſter might alſo be raiſed from the dead, overſpread his roſy face with a pale purple.—"You talk like a mad woman, Mrs. Feverſham," ſaid he peeviſhly.

"Like a ſimpleton, you mean, Sir Solomon; for to be ſure the old Colonel has been food for the worms long ago;—but pray is the poor man really a cripple? has he loſt his legs, arms, eyes, or——"

"Only one leg."

"No more!—Lord, I thought, by your talk, he had been half gone;—and pray what is become of his wife?"

"And his ſons and daughters, uncles and aunts, and grandmothers?" cried Lord Delworth; "do, Miſs Walſingham, tell Mrs. Feverſham all about it."

Mrs. Feverſham was up.—"As to uncles, and aunts, and grandmothers, ſhe could ſay nothing to his Lordſhip about them; but it was her opinion the

ſons and daughters of certain people would not daſh much in the next century."

"Lord, how ill-natured!" cried Miſs Muſhroom.

"And why not?" aſked Sir Solomon.

"If Mrs. Feverſham will give us leave," ſaid Lady Gauntlet, "we will go back to the mauſoleum."

"There, Madam, amid old and new coffins, mouldering bones, and mementos of recent mortality, I met——"

"Not Lord Denningcourt," Mr. Brudenel was ſure.

"No, Sir, it was only his miſtreſs, of whom it ſeems he is *heartily tired*."

"Does any body know any thing of her?" aſked Lady Louiſa.

"One of his old Jermyn-ſtreet cronies," the Major dared to ſay.

"This lady," Roſa dared ſay, "was never in Jermyn-ſtreet in her life."

Miſs Muſhroom wondered what ſhe could be doing among coffins, and ſuch things; it was vaſtly odd.

"She was kneeling, Ma'am."

"At prayers, quite a Magdalene," Lord Delworth ſuppoſed.

"I knew her, my Lord, when ſhe was the pride of her reſpectable family, the toaſt of the men, the—ſhall I ſay—envy or admiration of the women, ladies? it ſhall be as you pleaſe."

"The

"The envy, to be ſure," Mrs. Feverſham ſaid; "one as naturally followed the other as B followed A in the alphabet."

"Lord, what does ſhe mean?" cried Miſs Muſhroom.

"I knew *her*, my Lord, and ſhe knew *me*, though both our circumſtances were a little altered; I was not, indeed, in my ruſty black habit; but ſhe was all mourning, external and internal—ſhe was leaning on a ſmall coffin."

"Oh how vaſtly ſhocking!" cried Miſs Muſhroom.

"You was witneſs, my Lord, to an unexpected meeting between two young friends in Denningcourt-park, but cannot, from thence, have an idea of that in the mauſoleum; for there was more than a derangement of intellect to mourn—it was the irreparable loſs of honour which mingled the tears of a Magdalene with the anguiſh of a mother."

"My little Daniel!" ſaid the Duke, tears in his eyes.

"Pray, my Lord, give me my letter," cried Mrs. Woudbe.

"Never mind your letter; I will write you fifty on all ſorts of ſubjects; do let us hear the finiſh of the ſtory; I am vaſtly fond of hearing that pretty creature talk—one never thinks of her ruſty black habit—and ſhe is ſo like what I was a few years ſince."

"Then you really was not at the caſtle, after all?"

What caſuiſt could account for the change in Lady Gauntlet's voice and manner at this moment?

"I beg your pardon, Lady Gauntlet, I was."

"Well," and Lady Gauntlet was tempted, like the Duke, to call her a ſtrange girl—"why did you not tell me all this?"

"Ah, Madam! why did you deſert your own character?"

"I may have been deceived;—but what followed?"

"What followed is the ſecret of the priſon-houſe, which, even if I ſhould not reveal till I have but one auditor, I ſee the Duke will run away with me to Denningcourt, and I will run away with him all over the world."

"I hope—I hope," ſaid the Duke—"I hope I am not in love with you—not fooliſhly in love;—but you do with me what you will."

"My letter, dear Duke!" ſaid Mrs. Woudbe.

"It is addreſſed to *you*, my little Daniel."

"I diſclaim it."

"But you ſhould know what you diſclaim."

"Oh Miſs Walſingham! forgive, and do not ruin me;—read it yourſelf."

Had a viper ſtung Roſa, ſhe could not have ſtarted with more abhorrence.

"John Brown could tell you," ſaid Mrs. Feverſham, "what an excellent clerk I am, Miſs Walſingham;—ſhall I read it?"

"What

"What does Mrs. Woudbe ſay?"

"I think," ſaid the Duke, "the propoſal is, like the lady, clever; and if ſhe will read it, and aſcertain, if called on, as much of the contents as will clear your honour on any future occaſion——"

What! did Mrs. Feverſham hear right? Had ſhe, whom every body delighted to humble—ſhe who loved civil things ſo well, and had ſo few ſaid to her—had ſhe been thought clever—which was next to handſome—by one of the firſt and moſt reſpected Peers in the country? how delightful! how abſolutely intoxicating!—She nodded at the Duke—ſqueezed Roſa's hand, and put the letter into her lock pocket-book.

"And now, my little Daniel, you will truſt me with the charming Counteſs and her exotics, while you make your toilette; for I am anxious to introduce you to your new patroneſs with every advantage."

Roſa burſt into tears.

"How is this, Madam?"

"Joy, my Lord, all joy!—I feel as if at laſt—at laſt I was going home:—it is indeed a long-loſt dear-loved friend I am to ſee—but that is not all, my heart, I can never deſcribe the ſenſations of my heart;—it is now in harmony with every living creature.—Lady Gauntlet, I juſt now recollect when you delivered me from that vile Lord Lowder, and thank you for all your kindneſs. Mrs. Woudbe, I wiſh you may deſerve to be happy. Sir Solomon, you are my oldeſt acquaintance; I wiſh I could remember ſomething to

thank you for. Lord Delworth, may you and your fair bride be happy! Major, you will certainly die of *ennui* when I am gone. Mrs. Feverſham, if ever I have a houſe of my own, I will remember the aſylum you gave me in your's. To Lady Louiſa and Mr. Brudenel ſhe had not been introduced, and therefore only curtſied reſpectfully. And now, my Lord, I will be ready in ſix minutes."

The Duke ſeriouſly requeſted a private audience of the Counteſs. Roſa ſkipped up to her garret; but her wardrobe was removed back into the chamber ſhe had before occupied, and ſhe had not, in the flutter of her joy, changed dreſs when ſhe was joined by the Counteſs.

"I could not let you go, Miſs Walſingham, without wiſhing you well and happy; the many changes that will ſoon take place in my affairs, render it probable we may never meet again. I wiſh I could explain to you the ſecret cauſe of every thing that has occurred as far as concerns myſelf, but it cannot be. What, therefore, I have further to ſay, concerns yourſelf only—you remember when you made me the confidant of your attachment to Mr. Montreville?"

"Oh Lady Gauntlet! how can you wiſh me happy, and name that man? why ſhould his unworthy idea be conjured up at ſuch a moment as this?"

"Only to remind you of what I then hinted. I know the inference: you will aſk how I can juſtify myſelf

myſelf to myſelf for being the confidant of ſuch ſecrets. To this I anſwer, the world is a ſchool of experience, in which you are not yet initiated; and though one may lament other times, one muſt accommodate oneſelf to the preſent."

"Ah, how happy am I that I am going where no accommodations of that ſort are neceſſary!"

"How do you know?"

"I have been informed on the beſt authority."

"What! by the Duke? May not relations be partial?"

"He would not be unjuſt; but it is not from him I learn the worth of the lady to whom I ſhall be introduced; it is from thoſe endowments you ſhewed me the firſt time I ſaw Denningcourt, and from my own feelings, which tell me I ſhall never leave her."

"Had you not the ſame feelings when you came to me?"

"No, Madam;—I had the wiſh, but not the preſentiment, that your favour would be permanent."

"You have that preſentiment now?"

"Perfectly! entire!"

"Well, Miſs Walſingham, I ſee you are ready, and the Duke's carriage waits to make amends for that ugly phantom I raiſed to diſturb you. I frankly tell you, that your ideas of Lady Denningcourt can never be too high raiſed; you will find her all you think, and all you wiſh; but beware of Denningcourt."

"I fear nothing," cried Roſa, exultingly; "*I*, as well as the happy ladies I ſaw to day, ſhall be under Lady Denningcourt's roof, and protected by the Duke of Athelane. Adieu, Counteſs!"

The adieu was returned. Roſa flew down, poſitively refuſing to take with her a ſingle thing preſented to her by either of her late patroneſſes. The Duke viewed her with parental delight; ſhe ſcarce touched the footſtep; the carriage drove off, and ſhe bid farewell to Delworth.

CHAP. VI.

The Beggar proved to be like ſomebody; becomes uſeful, and, like the Heroines of all other famous Novels, carries a noſtrum in her looks, to put M. D.'s. out of practice.

LADY GAUNTLET, having made the Duke acquainted with ſuch of the leading traits in Roſa's ſtory as ſhe recollected herſelf, which, conſidering the intereſt ſhe appeared to take in it, was all fine acting, could not be very clear. He was prepared for that increaſe of confidence, which even, in the ſhort ride

from Delworth to Denningcourt jointure-houſe, our heroine frankly offered, and he as frankly accepted.

"Well!" ſaid the Duke, "you are now returning where you was ſo deſirous to remain."

"I feel I am," replied Roſa:—"nay, I am in imagination already there."

"Indeed! and what happens?"

"Every thing happy; I embrace my Elinor; ſhe knows me, and her amendment is evident; Lady Denningcourt, juſt in the ſame ſweet voice as ſhe ſpoke to you, is rejoiced; ſhe is kind to me; bids me take comfort to my heart, and no longer conſider myſelf as an unhappy wanderer."

"All this may be realized without a miracle; but though I profeſs myſelf an enemy to diſguiſe, which, in general, is only a cover to low cunning and diſhoneſt chicane, there are reaſons, not neceſſary at preſent to explain, why I wiſh you to retain your aſſumed name; that of Buhanun will make no friend in the family of Athelane."

The ſcene at the London inn that inſtant recurred to her recollection, not, however, with the prejudices of Elinor:—it was not to be thought a woman of Lady Denningcourt's exemplary character could ever have deſcended to intrigue with a married man, and one twice her age; and ſhe was too certain both of the honour and moral rectitude of Major Buhanun, to ſuſpect him of a criminal attachment. A myſtery, however, there certainly was attached to the tranſac-

tion, in which both him and his name were implicated: ſhe was ſilent and thoughtful.

"I have a preſcience," continued the Duke, "you are not quite ſatisfied with this arrangement; but the motives for the change on your ſide ſtill exiſt: mine you will know, ſooner or later, as you riſe or fall in my eſtimation."

"But Lady Hopely! ſhe already knows."

"No matter, ſhe is in my ſecret, and prepared to remember or forget you, according to the reſult of my viſit at Delworth. Your judgment, I believe, is good; and when proofs are added to belief, you will have liberty to regulate your own conduct; in the meantime I may tell you, that though I ſtill ſee the reſemblance I ſpoke of this afternoon, your voice, your mouth, and a dimpled ſmile about it reminds me ſtrongly of Lady Denningcourt; but, by a coincidence of natural effects, which it would puzzle a logician to define, that likeneſs is blended with a ſtrong caſt of him you call your firſt patron."

"Of Colonel Buhanun! did you know him, Sir? I have indeed been told I reſembled him."

"Indeed! and by whom, pray?"

"One who knew him well; one whoſe memory I revere; Major Buhanun."

"Ay, *he* did know him, and ſo did I—too well!"

"Too well, Sir! could any body know ſo good a man too well?"

The

The Duke was ſilent, but after a pauſe—"So the Major thought you like his nephew?"

"So like, he would at firſt, and indeed at times I believe to the laſt, think I was his daughter."

"And how are you ſure he was miſtaken?"

"Oh very ſure! I had almoſt ſaid too ſure, ſince my mother is yet alive."

"And in indigence?"

"No, thank God!—I remember nothing of my father; but have lately ſeen my mother in good circumſtances, and married to a ſecond huſband."

"Go on," ſaid the Duke, liſtening with earneſt attention.

"I diſcovered her by accident:—if it was natural ſympathy impelled her to be kind to me, it was unhappily not reciprocal. I am afraid I am to blame; I knew my mother, but my heart did not acknowledge her:—ſhe had an accident: I felt the duty, but not the affection of a child; and to this hour ſhe is ignorant that her nurſe was her deſerted daughter."

"Your ſtory, my little Daniel," ſaid the Duke, "is full of intereſt; and I never ſaw the jointure-houſe portico with leſs pleaſure than at this moment:—but I am always in the library at ſix in the morning; you muſt meet me there, and tell me all about this mother."

The carriage having turned through a double row of venerable oaks, to the road in front of the houſe, ſtopped

ſtopped at a grand, well-lighted entrance, where Lady Hopely was looking out for the carriage.

"Is it you, Duke?" ſaid ſhe; "and you have a companion too! then I am not diſgraced by fighting her battles, after ſhe left Edinburgh ſo ſuddenly, and as ſome would believe, in ſuch gay company.—She is a good girl, or you would not have brought her."

"Such as ſhe is, Lady Hopely, I am pleaſed to call her my protegée, and beg you will have the goodneſs to introduce her as ſuch to your friends."

"Your's! your protegée? delightful! this is an event exactly in my own way; no mortal can comprehend it:—but come, my dear, the Duke will follow. Has he warned you not to ſay naughty words? You muſt forget you ever heard the name of Buhanun; to mention it before an Athelane, is a deadly ſin, out of benefit of clergy."

Again Roſa thought of the adventure at the inn.

"Come," continued Lady Hopely, feeling her hand tremble—"courage! if we be of importance to you, you are no leſs ſo to us: the peace of an amiable woman may be reſtored by your means; if you ſucceed, we will hail you as the Thane of Athelane.

A door was thrown open, where the Counteſs with Miſs Angus, and her conſtant ſhadow, Miſs Bruce, were ſeated.

"My dear Counteſs," ſaid Lady Hopely, "I bring you the Duke's *protegée*; I am vaſtly ſorry for the poor man, he is already in his dotage; and though

it

it certainly is a puzzle how a laſſie he likes, I like, and you *will* like, came to be dropped among the folks at Delworth, yet he pretends he has unravelled it."

The Duke entered, and was leading Roſa towards the Counteſs, when, to her confuſion and mortification, ſhe beheld the fine alabaſter of her complexion change to vivid paleneſs; her ſmooth brow curved, as if drawn by convulſion; and ſuch a hollow eager caſt in her eyes, as ſhe gazed on her face, as totally routed all the ſanguine viſions hope had raiſed.

"Like me!" exclaimed Lady Denningcourt, in a deep half groan.

"Dear Elinor," whiſpered the Duke, "I thought it would ſtrike you, but did not expect you would be ſo much affected:—come, be yourſelf then (in a raiſed voice); Lady Denningcourt, I have the honour to preſent Miſs Walſingham—Miſs Angus, Miſs Bruce, my protegée."

Roſa was confuſed and agitated; her heart palpitating to agony, and ſwelling to ſuffocation, ſhe could ſcarce ſupport herſelf; and when, with a ſenſation more tender than joy, more intoxicating than pleaſure, ſhe felt the cold trembling lip of Lady Denningcourt preſs her burning cheek, ſhe fell ſenſeleſs at her feet.

"Like me!" repeated the Counteſs, raiſing her tenderly.

"Why

"Why really, now you mention it," cried Lady Hopely, with vivacity, "she *is* like you: I was struck with her features the first time I saw her; and now—Oh yes, it *is* you she resembles—but we frightened her:—Miss Angus, do, my dear, convince Miss Walsingham she is not absolutely hideous; Margaret Bruce stares, as if she had found out something too—Well, child, what is the discovery? don't you perceive from the tip of Miss Walsingham's ear to the dimple in her chin, a likeness to *somebody* you know?"

Whether Miss Bruce understood or not, she blushed, but followed Miss Angus's lead in complimenting Rosa; and as Lady Denningcourt's earnest and unremitting, though silent observations on her person became more composed, till all the unpleasant emotions of surprise gradually changed to a placid wonder, which was no restraint on her native goodness of heart, our heroine felt that she was indeed at home.

The Duke had already seen the doctor in private; and as it was, in his opinion, best to defer the meeting of the young friends till morning, Rosa obtained a reluctant permission to retire early, on account of the fatigues she had undergone during the last night and day. Miss Angus and Miss Bruce obligingly accompanied her to her chamber: the former offering her woman to assist her to undress, Rosa, smiling, answered, "she had always been used to be her own *femme de chambre*;" a most astonishing thing in Miss

Miſs Bruce's opinion—ſo aſtoniſhing, that when they returned to the ſaloon, ſhe communicated it to the company. They, however, were too much intereſted in communications of another ſort to attend to her. The Duke was relating to them what had paſſed at Delworth; Lady Hopely could not, without adverting to painful ſubjects, relate particulars of her former knowledge of the heroine of the tale, but ſaid, "ſhe knew her to be an uncommonly charming character."

Lady Denningcourt, pleaſed at ſuch a welcome addition to her family, thanked the Duke for the pains he had taken, and retired to reſt, elated with the hope of ſeeing that health, mental and perſonal, on which her own depended, reſtored by means of the amiable ſtranger.

Roſa's laſt waking meditation was on Lady Denningcourt; and after thanking Heaven, with all the fervency of contented gratitude, for the providence of the day, ſhe ſunk into reſt ſo profound, that it was not till Mrs. Betty Brown opened the window ſhutters, and pulled up the curtains, at eight the next morning, that ſhe awoke.

"Well, Miſs Roſy," cried Betty, "here you be—who but you; and who'd a thought you'd been turned out one minit, and fotcht back the next by his Grace himſelf; for my part, I think there's reaſon in roaſting of eggs;—and the butler ſes too, as our Lady did nothen in the world but ſtare at you all

ſupper

ſupper time; and he ſes you looked very toll loll; and ſo, I dare ſay, you did; but I bag of all love, you won't think of calling me Betty; becauſe you ſee, Miſs, I have told our folks in the ſtuart's room, as I kept a ouſe of my own; and, you ſee, they'll certainly think as it's nothen in the world but my braggadocia."

Roſa's dreams were as pleaſant as her reſt was undiſturbed: ſhe had been with Montreville, the Montreville ſhe knew at Pontefract, and no Mrs. Woudbe was ſo much as thought on: his image, once ſo dear, was ſo ſtrongly impreſſed on her mind when ſhe awoke, that it required recollections deep and dire to chaſe him thence; ſo that Betty had got to "an ouſe of her own" before ſhe diſtinctly knew where ſhe was.

"But when we are alone, may I not call you Betty?" ſhe replied; "you know I uſed to do ſo when you *had* a houſe of your own."

"Why, Miſs, uſe is ſecond nature, and ſo you had better not run no riſk; for as John Brown uſed to ſay——"

"Ah, Betty! I am glad to hear you ſpeak of good John Brown."

"Lord, Miſs Roſy, I promiſe you I never wiſh to do no ſuch thing;—but you know what a paſſel of nonſenſe he uſed to ſtuff his poor head with out of old books; but I bag, Miſs, if our ſtuart, a fine portly man, and as big as three of John Brown, aſks you any thing

thing about my husband, you'll never own to he being a sowger;—and there's Mr. M'Lane—you know Mr. M'Lane, Miss?"

"How should I know him, Betty?"

"No matter who knows him, Miss, for the matter of that—a poor, proud, prodigality parson—as our stuart ses, all the Scotch is no better nor a passel of nothenites. His Grace, to be sure, has got a grand castle, and a heap of estates; but, then, there 'tis all overrun with poor relations, and that's what I hates; I never got no good from sitch cattle, not I, sept runin up a score;—I am sure I have had my share of sufferens."

"But good John Brown, Betty, he made up for all."

"Not he, indeed, Miss, he never made up nothen to me; howsever, Mr. M'Lane sent for me to his room;—to be sure, as our stuart ses, 'twould have been better manners for he to come to mine;—for if John Brown was a sowger, that was more nor he knowed; and what the eye don't see, the heart don't grieve;—howsever, he said his Grace ordered me, upon my pericle, not to drop a syllabub about the blackamore Kurnel's taking you out of charity; now, as to the blackamore Kurnel, Miss Elinor, poor sole, bid me never not to mention his name; no more I ever did, only to our stuart."

"And why to him, Betty, if you were commanded not?"

"Why,

"Why, Miſs, becauſe, to tell you the truth, Mr. M'Lane wanted to lock the ſtable when the ſteed was ſtolen; for after you was turned out, I told our ſtuart the whole ſtory, ſept about John Brown being a ſowger; and, Oh dear, ah dear, Miſs, what a ſtory he told me about that blackamore Kurnel!—gracious heart! if my hair did not ſtand an ind!—but I muſt not tell no man, woman, nor child—not that it infected me ſo much, becauſe I had an inkling of it once at Penry; but leaſt ſaid is ſoondeſt mended, and a cloſe tongue makes a wiſe head;—ſo you ſee, Miſs, one good turn deſerves another: You ſay as my huſband was a credibility parſon—ſuppoſe a ſize man, or ſome other great officer, and I'll ſay as I knowed you at boarding-ſchool, and your parents was topping tradeſmen, and well to do."

Roſa was not ſurpriſed to find the Duke's caution extend to his ſervants; and had not Betty, with her vanity, betrayed ſuch entire indifference towards her huſband, ſhe could have been amuſed by it.

"Really, Mrs. Brown," ſaid ſhe, coldly, "I know of no better praiſe to give your huſband than what he juſtly merited, that of unimpeached integrity."

"Well, well, Miſs, I don't want to diſparage John Brown no more nor you; but if Miſs Elinor gets her ſenſes again, ſhe'll be a Ducheſs, that's a ſure mark, and ſo, as our ſtuart ſes, he'll wait till my ſeven years is up; for you ſee, Miſs, I can't marry before;

before; why I ſhall be a Ducheſs's woman, and that will be as miſbecoming for a ſowger's wife as for you to be perked up among quality, when every body knowed as you was nothen but a poor Beggar Girl; but Lord, Miſs, here are you keepen me, when his Grace and my Lady are waiting for nothen in the world but to go with you to Miſs Elinor."

"Me keeping you, Betty! why did you not tell me this before?"

"Well, Miſs, and I ſhould, only you would keep talking about John Brown, and ſuch nonſenſe."

Roſa made all poſſible haſte. "But how is Elinor to-day?"

"She was very rumbuſtious once this morning; but ſhe is in her ſulks now. I am ſure my ſufferens with her is great; ſometimes ſhe wont cloſe her poor eyes all night; howſever, my Lady has been in her room, and kiſſed her, and cried, and ſaid, I dare ſay, twenty kind things; and ſo, as ſhe never hardly ſpeaks, we did not inſpect it;—but, on a ſudden—Lord, I was fit to drop—ſhe ſpoke as quiet as I do now.—'Where is my Roſa? you promiſed I ſhould ſee her.'—My Lady was ready to run wild with joy. 'You ſhall ſee her,' ſes ſhe; 'did I ever deceive you, Elinor?'—I am ſure the wiſdom of King Solomon, no, nor that comical Joe Miller, as our ſtuart is always reading, could not have made a no better anſwer. 'No,' ſes ſhe, 'it is I who deceived you; but Roſa would have adviſed me better.'—Well, my Lady was fit to break

her

her heart, ſhe was ſo glad; and ſhe ran to the library to his Grace."

"I am ready," cried Roſa, eagerly.

"Well, Miſs, I muſt ſay that for your face I ſaid before, when you was quite a little dwarf, ſhivering in the waſh-tub, it is worth waſhing;—my gracious, if you don't uſes nothen but water! for my part, I always uſe nothen but milk of roſes;—and, upon my word, a very nice muſlin dreſs too!"

Roſa had no longer patience; but paſſing Betty while ſhe was examining her dreſs, found the way to the library.

Lady Denningcourt and the Duke had been congratulating each other on the ſenſe and recollection of Elinor, and now waited to witneſs an interview which they expected would be very affecting; but neither the intereſt nor the importance of the event retained a place in Lady Denningcourt's ideas; from the moment of Roſa's entrance, her complexion and features underwent the ſame change as on the preceding evening, and ſhe recoiled ſeveral paces back.

Roſa was no leſs grieved than mortified.

After a long pauſe ſhe again advanced; and taking Roſa's hand, led her nearer the light, when an anxious and ſolemn ſcrutiny of her features was followed by a particular ſurvey of her perſon; the fine ringlets, which ſhaded her elegant-formed ſhoulder, were put back. Tears flowed from Lady Denningcourt's eyes; ſhe relinquiſhed the hand ſhe held; her own dropped lifeleſs,

lifeleſs, as ſhe turned to the Duke, and deeply ſighing, exclaimed, "Like me!"

The Duke, concerned and affected, told her ſhe forgot Miſs Athelane; then addreſſing Roſa with the morning ſalutations, aſked why a gloom overſpread her fair face? "You looked," he added, "at your entrance, as if conſcious of the power to diſpenſe the happineſs you felt yourſelf."

"Oh, my Lord!" ſhe replied, "how flattering to my heart would that conſciouſneſs be! but I ſink under a contrary feeling; misfortune purſues me even here: if my unhappy reſemblance muſt always ſo affect Lady Denningcourt, let me be rather baniſhed her preſence for ever than give her pain."

"Fear it not," replied the Duke; "when it ceaſes to ſurpriſe, it will pleaſe; ſhe will behold you with more delight than pain."

"That time," joined Lady Denningcourt, with compaſſion, "is already come, Miſs Walſingham; and if you were not endeared to me by the ſoothing hope of contributing to the reſtoration of my Elinor, your face is ſuch a paſſport to my affection, that I could have ſelected you from a multitude as an object of regard; and when I tell you it is the fond choice of my virgin love, the huſband of my heart, the——yes, I owe you my confidence for the pain I have given you—the father of my Elinor you reſemble——"

"Heavenly God!" cried Roſa, ſtarting back, "was Colonel Buhanun the father of Elinor?"

Lady

Lady Denningcourt ſunk on a ſofa.—"What!" cried ſhe, ſhaking from head to foot, "did you know Colonel Buhanun?"

Roſa wept.

"What idea burns on my brain," continued the Counteſs. "How old are you?"

"About the age of Miſs Athelane."

"Then," replied the Counteſs, as if relieved from a painful ſurmiſe, "it cannot be."

"Still you forget Miſs Athelane, Madam," ſaid the Duke.

"No, ah, no! but I remember her father!—You, Miſs Walſingham, could not know Colonel Buhanun? you have not been in India?"

"Forgive me, Sir," cried Roſa, folding her hands in a ſupplicating attitude.

"Forgive you! what have you done?" aſked Lady Denningcourt—"why won't you anſwer me? did you, could you know Colonel Buhanun?"

The Duke again reminded her of Miſs Athelane. "You will," he added, "be unfit for the interview you were ſo anxious to witneſs."

"I am unfit already, Sir;—why are you a party in ſo ill-timed a reſerve? Tell me, Miſs Walſingham, I conjure you, if you regard my peace, were you related to Colonel Buhanun?"

Roſa anſwered, without heſitation, in the negative.

"What, then, means this apparent myſtery? did you know him?"

Roſa threw herſelf on her knees: ſhe no longer took a cautionary leſſon from the Duke's looks; ſhe implored Lady Denningcourt's pardon for being ſurpriſed into a miſtake, againſt which ſhe had been warned; but whatever might be the conſequence to herſelf, ſhe could not bear to ſee her Ladyſhip pained by a ſuſpenſe it was in her power to relieve. "You know, Madam," ſhe continued, "that I am wretched and friendleſs, but not *how* wretched, and *how* friendleſs;—that my mother, a common mendicant, abandoned me in my infancy, left me a houſeleſs, ſtarving little Beggar;—that I was taken, relieved, beloved, and educated by the beſt and moſt charitable of men—by the ever-lamented Colonel Buhanun;—and Oh!" ſhe cried, with folded hands and ſtreaming eyes, while Lady Denningcourt ſat fixed and pale as marble, "let not that, which was the firſt bleſſing and advantage of my humble exiſtence, now be turned to my misfortune; let not the poor deſerted child, whoſe miſeries found an eaſy acceſs to the heart of benevolence, become on that account the unhappy object of your averſion! Alas! Madam, however he may have offended *you*, I can never ceaſe to remember the emanations of his generous ſoul; I owe to him that I am not a companion of vice, as well as poverty; and my tears muſt flow for him as long as I have memory."

"How long," aſked Lady Denningcourt, in a voice ſcarce articulate, "have you left India?"

India! Roſa never was out of Britain.

Where then did ſhe ſee Colonel Buhanun?

At Penry.

"God of heaven!"

Yes, it was there, when abandoned by her mother, Roſa was relieved by Colonel Buhanun.

Lady Denningcourt fell back, and was carried ſenſeleſs to her chamber.

Lady Hopely, who was not an early riſer, being alarmed, and informed by the Duke of what had paſſed, judged, that as the part of Roſa's hiſtory, which would moſt afflict the Counteſs, was the reſidence of the Colonel in England, it would moſt properly come from themſelves when ſhe was perfectly recovered. Accordingly ſhe haſtened to her chamber, while the Duke, anxious to relieve Roſa from the grief and regret ſhe felt at having cauſed Lady Denningcourt's indiſpoſition, as well as to try the effect of her preſence on Elinor, propoſed to accompany her to her friend.

Never had Roſa ſtood more in need of a moment to collect her thoughts; but not daring to aſk for indulgence at ſo intereſting a period, ſhe followed the Duke's lead to the *boudoir*, where ſhe had firſt ſeen Elinor, which was the only place where ſhe would take nouriſhment; and indeed was ſo fond of it, that it was often with difficulty ſhe could be prevailed on to ſleep out of it.

She

She had waited a few minutes, after the Counteſs left her, in all the flutters of impatient expectation, but had now ſunk into a ſullen gloom, from which no effort could rouſe her.

"I have brought your Roſa, my dear Miſs Athelane; won't you welcome her?" ſaid the Duke.

"Elinor! my dear Elinor! won't you ſpeak to your Roſa? nor ſo much as look at her?"

"She is in her ſulks," whiſpered Betty, "and perhaps won't ſpeak this week."

"Elinor! dear Elinor!" repeated Roſa.

The fair ſtatue was immoveable, and gave no ſign of intellect.

Perhaps this was the moſt trying affliction Roſa ever felt: ſhe wept, embraced, and ſtill called on her dear Elinor without the leaſt effect.

The diſappointment of the Duke was viſible.

The doctor, however, was not diſcouraged: he adviſed her being left to her attendants; and the Duke inquired, in a voice of dejection, if the ladies were in the breakfaſt-room? Finding they were not, he told Roſa he ſhould meet her there when the bell rung; and ſhe was going to her chamber, when a footman informed her a perſon wanted to ſpeak to her.

"To me!" cried Roſa.

"Yes; and as he was a poor cripple, and ſeemed to want charity, the man ſaid he had left him in the little hall."

Roſa had hoped John Brown was on his way to Edinburgh; but as this was unqueſtionably him, ſhe haſtened to the little hall.

The gardener, who carried her packet to the caſtle, had found it "mortal hot walking;" and meeting at the door of an hedge ale-houſe other as hot ſouls as his own, talked ſo oddly when he ſtaggered acroſs the park, and delivered the packet, that John lamented he had

"Taken an enemy into his mouth, to ſteal away his brains."

The man was conſcious of no ſuch theft; on the contrary, as he flattered himſelf nobody could talk better, he entered into ſuch an account of affairs at Delworth, as convinced honeſt John, that, as he ſaid, the

"Jewel of a maid is her good name,
"And no legacy ſo rich as honeſty;"

his favourite maid Roſa had loſt the one, and was ſuſpected by the inmates of Delworth to have parted with the other. John thought if there were a maid in the world who was worthy to retain this jewel, it was Roſa; and therefore, after conſulting his pillow on the buſineſs, he reſolved to go to Delworth, and endeavour to learn the ſtate of affairs from herſelf.

"Why," ſaid he, on approaching Delworth Houſe, "why ſhould I be more afraid to enter this gate, than I have been at ſtorming a citadel?

"—Our

" ——— Our doubts are traitors,
" And make us loſe the good we oft might win
" By fearing to attempt."———

So on ſtumped John,

———" Fearful commentings,"

ſaid he, as he opened the gate of the court-yard,

" Are leaden ſervitors to dull delay."

In that moment he was ſtruck dumb with aſtoniſhment, at ſeeing the roſy gills, the white hat, the Morocco ſlippers, the chintz morning frock; in ſhort, at ſeeing Sir Solomon Muſhroom altogether, ſtalking from the ſtables, where his fine horſes ſtood, to the back entrance of the houſe.

" The image of a wicked, heinous fault
" Is in his eye,"

quoth John; and God forgive me if I don't preſage ſome miſchief to poor Miſs Roſy; but though he does

" Beſtride the world like a Coloſſus,"

yet it is, as my poor Colonel ſaid, as well to know an evil, as to fear it; and

" Great men have reaching hands;"

ſo I will take off my hat, which is what I never did when I was a gentleman ſoldier to any body but my Colonel, and my wife, and aſk his Honour—honour ſignifies nothing when addreſſed to ſuch men as Sir Solomon Muſhroom—if he can help me to the ſight of Miſs Roſy."

"No—ſhe is not here, ſhe is gone," in a loud rough voice, as Sir Solomon entered the houſe, had like to have annihilated poor John.

"Ah maſter timber-toe," cried one of the grooms, who remembered him paſſing on the outſide of the ſtage, "what you are new rigged? you are got into good plight?"

This bit of wit, which was accompanied with a roll of the tongue and a leer of the eye at another groom, went to John's heart.

"What," ſaid he, "ſhall it be ever ſaid, that John Brown

"Cramm'd his maw, or cloth'd his back
"From filthy vice?"

and ſo, without ſaying another word, John returned to the caſtle; and while putting on his own old clothes,

"'Tis the mind,"

ſaid he,

"makes the body rich;
"And, as the ſun breaks through the darkeſt cloud,
"So honour ſhineth in the meaneſt habit."

And now I think I can have heart to ſpeak to the great lady herſelf, who was ſo honourable to Miſs Roſa; for certainly talking loud with another man's coat on one's back, except indeed the King's coat, is like fighting under a falſe banner."

Before he got out of the park, he met the ſame gardener's labourer who brought him the packet, and from him learned where Roſa was.—"So here," ſaid he,

he, having given an account of the morning's employment, "here I am with a

"Thouſand hearts within my boſom."

Women—Miſs Roſy—

"Women are not in their beſt fortunes ſtrong,"

much leſs when every fool is ready to put upon them; and

"Be thou as chaſte as ice, as pure as ſnow,
"Thou ſhalt not eſcape calumny,"

and that it is, Miſs, that makes me think ſo much of my poor Betty;" and John wiped his eye with a piece of an old ſilk handkerchief.

Roſa, impatient to give eaſe to his honeſt heart, could not find words or breath to tell him half faſt enough how happily every thing had turned out. She wiſhed alſo to tell him of his "poor Betty;" but certain that poverty would damp his welcome, was begging him to return to Denningcourt Caſtle, and change his old clothes for thoſe better ones, which he knew were not the price of diſhoneſty, when Mrs. Betty put firſt her head, and then her whole well-dreſſed figure, in at the door, with "Lord, Miſs, who could think you would ſtand here, ſhilly ſhally, with that poor object, while the Duke and the two young ladies are waiting for you to breakfaſt.—You may go to the ſervants' hall, friend; all the poor folk that come here, eat and drink as much as they like.—Oh Miſs Roſy! here's our ſtuart coming; and now, for

all he is ſuch a portly man, and worth a power of money, you'll ſee how perſpective he behaves to me, and to you too, for all I told him about the blackamore Kurnel."

The ſteward, a man, as Betty ſaid, as big as three of John, entered from one door of the little hall, in his way to the other; he bowed to Roſa, ſmiled at Betty, and having great weight to carry, went on in a cautious, conſequential pace.

John ſtaggered back; Roſa advanced towards him, and Betty turned her front to the ſmiling ſteward. John, at length, unable to contain the overflow of his feeling, ſtumped up to his wife, caught her in his arms, and ſobbed "Betty—my dear Betty!"

Betty ſent forth a ſucceſſion of long ſcreams, and John expected a fit, but they were a ſort of ungenteel infirmity Betty had left off; ſhe ſtruggled with more than female ſtrength, till ſhe had not only emancipated herſelf, but thrown John down; then running towards the ſteward, cried, "Oh goodneſs! Oh gracious! a ghoſt! a ghoſt! ſave me from the ghoſt!"

The ſteward ſtopped with a ready "What's the matter?—who are you?"

"My dear Betty," cried John, having gained his foot, and wiping his eyes with the bit of ſilk handkerchief, "have you quite forgot me? or has joy bewildered your ſenſes? Ah my poor girl, alack! alack!

"Grief hath changed me ſince you ſaw me laſt;
"And careful hours, with Time's deformed hand,
"Have written ſtrange defeatures in my face."

"As

"As to writing," replied Betty, turning her eyes away with diſguſt, "nobody never wrote no letter to me; and I don't believe I never ſeed your yeller face in my life."

"Betty!" and John's yellow face expreſſed an equal portion of anger and ſurpriſe,

"Diſgrace has of late knock'd too often at my door."

"There let it knock—it ſhan't come to mine."

"Betty, you cannot have forgot your huſband? for though

"Proſperity is the very bond of love,
"Whoſe freſh complexion, and whoſe heart together,
"Affliction alters."

"Freſh complexion! why ſure you don't go to pretend to freſh complexion? I am ſure it makes me ſick to look at you."

John's colour roſe. "I am ſorry you are grown ſo nice, Mrs. Brown; but if you are altered, I am not."

"Why then I adviſe you to alter, for you can't never change for the worſt."

"Woman! woman!

"Be not thy tongue thy own ſhame's orator;
"Look ſweet, ſpeak fair, become diſloyalty;
"Apparel vice like virtue's harbinger;
"Bear a fair preſence, though your heart *be* tainted."

Poor Betty's misfortune had come upon her in the moment leaſt expected, and ſhe was in a moſt perplexing dilemma; Mr. Steward's habitual ſmile was

changed to earneſt attention; and while Roſa walked to a window, to avoid appeals from either of the contending parties, he ſtood firmly noting all that paſſed.

"Why doſt look ſo ſtrangely, wife? I left thee to perform a dear duty; but in all my ſufferings, I have been faithful. Ah, Betty!

"'Tis one thing to be tempted, another to fall."

"As to tempting, I defy Satan and all his imps; and may be you are one of them in the likeneſs of John Brown, my huſband, who went away, and left me to be put upon by every body; I don't believe you are he no more nor nothing."

"You don't wiſh to believe it, Betty; but

"There are no tricks in plain and ſimple faith."

"Tricks! I believe you know more about tricks nor me; but don't think to trick me; I married you, if it be you, when you was a tight able man, and I ſhan't never go to take up with a cripple, as got hardly no coat to his back."

John put his piece of handkerchief in his pocket.

"You are not aſked, Betty, to take up with the cripple; but

——— "Do not tempt my miſery,
"Leſt that it make me ſo unſound a man
"As to upbraid you with thoſe kindneſſes
"That I have done for you."

"Me make you unſound! is that all you learn in your books? I am ſure nobody can't call a man with but

but one leg a ſound man. I don't care that for your ſpeeches out of old tattered books;" and Betty very ungraciouſly threw a piece of paper, which ſhe had been twiſting into all ſorts of forms, at her liege lord.

"Keep thy temper, however, Betty; ſee that you do nothing to repent of, for

"The wounds heal ill that men do give themſelves."

"Fiddle faddle about wounds and man; I don't know that I am going to give myſelf any thing like it; and as to repenting, I am not afraid of no ſuch thing; you left me——"

"On a dear duty, Betty!"

"Duty! what duty can a man have to leave his wife?"

As this ſmart repartee of Betty was accompanied with a ſly leer at Maſter Steward, as Maſter Steward anſwered with a half ſmile, and as neither the one nor the other eſcaped the obſervation of honeſt John,

"Poor woman!" quoth he, in an accent of mingled pity and indignation,

"Head-ſtrong liberty is laſh'd with woe."

And though a man is degraded by contention with a woman; though to puniſh them

——————"'Tis greater ſkill,
"In true hate, to let them have their will;
"The very devils cannot pleaſe them better."

Yet, as I do not hate thee, I will tell thee!"

"As John's voice was raiſed, Mr. Steward adviſed him to ſpeak lower; adding, "Really, friend,

when you anſwer ladies, it ſhould be in civiler terms."

" I am not bound to pleaſe thee with my anſwers ;"

Or, if I were,

" An honeſt tale ſpeeds beſt being plainly told."

John's arm and ſtump began to work alternately.

" Betty's head was toſſed, and her brow knit in a very pretty ſcornful manner ; but it was no longer ſafe to trifle with John ; he ſtepped up cloſe to her, flouriſhing not one arm, but both. " If that great man is of conſequence to you, Mrs. Brown, bid him not meddle ; and

" Fye, fye, unknit that threatening unkind brow,
" And dart not ſcornful glances from thoſe eyes,
" To wound thy lord, thy king, thy maſter."

Betty, though frightened, anſwered, having firſt got round the other ſide of the ſteward, that ſhe cared for no Lord but my Lord Duke, nor no King but King George, and ſhe was old enough and wiſe enough to govern herſelf.

" Woman, woman !" quoth John, increaſing in warmth,

" Such duty as the ſubject owes his prince,
" Even ſuch a woman oweth her true lord."

" Lord help your crazy head !" cried Betty, in an humbler tone of voice, and drawing ſtill near the ſteward.

" Keep off, friend," quoth Maſter Steward.

"And why ſo?

——"Thou *friend* of an ill faſhion—"

Nay,

"Look not big, nor ſtorm, nor ſtare, nor fret;
"I ſtay here on my bond."

My wife

"Is my goods, my chattels, ſhe is my houſe, my houſehold ſtuff, my field, my barn, my horſe, my ox, my aſs, my any thing; and here ſhe ſtands, touch her who dare!"

Mr. Steward could not have been Mr. Steward in the Denningcourt family, had he not been a man of moral conduct; and though he had conducted himſelf with a ſpice of gallantry which convinced Betty ſhe might be Mr. Steward's lady, it was as far from his intention as intereſt to ſeparate man and wife; he therefore bid John ſpeak in a lower key, and added, as he moved his unwieldy perſon out of the hall, nobody wiſhed to deprive him of his right.

Poor Betty, whoſe courage ſubſided the inſtant her great ſupport left her, now began to whine. "Lord, John Brown," ſhe cried, "how can you talk ſo about goods and chattels, and I don't know what; I don't know what goods and chattels you may have, but I have not got nothing but my clothes, and I ſhall never part with none of them; and as to houſe and houſehold ſtuff, why, Lord, they are all ſold for almoſt nothen, and enough too; the horſe was ſpavined, and the houſehold ſtuff worm-eaten; but then

as

as to oxeſſes and aſſeſſes, why you know we never had no ſuch thing belonging to us."

John could not ſee Betty's tears unmoved; he took out his piece of handkerchief, "Oh Betty! he cried,

"My better parts are all thrown down."

"To be ſure they are, John Brown; every body knows one's legs is every body's better part."

"Hard-hearted woman! thou doſt not feel that

——"Praiſing what is loſt
"Makes the remembrance more dear."

But I will not trouble thee; I know I left thee to ſorrow;

"And he that ſtands on a ſlippery place
"Makes nice of no vile hold to ſtay himſelf up."

"Sorrow, indeed! yes, and ſlippery enough I ſhould have found it, for there I was like to loſe the uſe of *both my* legs; nobody knows what has been my ſufferens; and, after all, when I am picking up a little, to have a huſband, as I thought dead and buried, come out of his peaceful grave, when nobody never thought of no ſuch thing—Oh dear, dear, it is too bad!"

"'Tis a ſore affliction indeed, Betty," replied John, with a melancholy ſmile; but

——"Wearineſs can ſnore on the flint,
"While reſty ſloth pines on the down pillow."

"Ay, John, I always told you that you was good at ſnoring."

"Well,

"Well, Betty, I forgive thy "biting words," I know

"How quickly nature falls to revolt
"When gold becomes her object."

"But farewell, wife!

"We'll no more meet, no more ſee one another;
"But yet thou art my fleſh and blood."

Well, no matter; if ever John Brown ſhould again have money or friends, thou ſhalt want neither; if not,

"—— Life being weary of worldly bars,
"Never lacks power to diſmiſs itſelf;"

and this cripple and yellow face ſhall make thee ſick no more."

Roſa had continued an ear-witneſs of the matrimonial diſcord, ſympathiſing with the feelings of honeſt John; but not chuſing to ſeem to obſerve them, and hoping the ſilence that followed his laſt ſpeech preceded a reconciliation, till, after two minutes' dead ſilence, Betty burſt out crying and lamenting—

Never, there never was ſo misfortunate a woman: ſhe ſuppoſed, now, the poor ſimple man was off again; and what good was a huſbent to a poor woman, when he was always taking ſuch freaks, and come back when nobody wanted him, without all his limbs; and now God knew whether he would ever come back; or if he did, whether he might not leave all his limbs behind, and ſo come home blind, as well

as lame. Oh! nobody who once kept a ouſe of their own, was never ſo misfortunate.

"Where is he gone?" ſaid Roſa, vexed and ſurpriſed, on turning round, to ſee only Betty.

"Gone, Miſs! who can tell? 'tis a long lane that has no turning; but you ſee, Miſs, there is no end to my ſufferens; but, howſever, I ſhan't vex myſelf no more about him; enough is never enough with him. How he runs on with rig my roll ſtuff out of ſilly books, and no ſooner come back than off he is again. Oh, dear, dear! what a misfortunate perſon I am; I never can ſhew my noſe in the ſtuart's room no more."

"I muſt tell you, Mrs. Brown (and Roſa's voice, as well as colour, roſe), it would be more to your credit to think leſs of any other man, and more of the good creature you ſent away ſo unfeelingly."

"Who, me, Miſs! me ſent him away! geminigig! as our ſtuart ſes, did he not pop off as faſt as if he had twenty legs, making fooliſh ſpeeches all the while, and banging his arms as if the weather had been froſty? and was not my heart in my mouth to call him back? and didn't I fall a crying fit to break—but, Lord, if there is not my bell! Miſs, you muſt go to breakfaſt. Again! what's the matter now?"

"Stop, Betty; it is Elinor's bell."

Betty did not ſtop; and Roſa, after heſitating a ſhort time whether ſhe ſhould go to the breakfaſt-room,

room, or follow her, deciding on the latter, ſhe was met near Elinor's door by Betty, running and crying, "Oh, dear! Miſs Elinor is in one of her rumbuſtious fits—I muſt fetch the doctor."

Scarce had ſhe ſpoke before, firſt, Dido, and then Elinor, ruſhed after her.

"My dear, dear Elinor!" cried Roſa.

"Ah, Roſa! my own dear Roſa! are you indeed come back?"

The violence at once ſubſided; and when the doctor followed Betty, he found his patient weeping in the arms of her friend.

As he conſidered this a certain ſign of convaleſcence, he imparted the grateful tidings immediately to the Duke, who gladly carried it to Lady Denningcourt; and never, indeed, was ſhe in greater need of conſolation.

When the Counteſs heard from her Lord the ſtrange, and, to her, incredible account of the recent death, as he heard it from Major Buhanun, of a man whom ſhe had long conſidered as no more, ſhe was at Court; and the Duke of Athelane happening to be in the circle, ſhe mentioned it to him as an odd and groundleſs report. The manner in which he received it, however, alarmed her; and when, on further inveſtigation, ſhe found he actually had ſurvived his intended ſuicide, the regret ſhe felt was as poignant, and perhaps laſting, as when the news of his death was received firſt at Athelane.

But

But it is impoſſible to paint the diſtracting agony of her ſoul, when ſhe underſtood he had been in England, and muſt have heard, have known, nay, perhaps ſeen her the contented, and apparently happy wife of another; while he, in ill health, deprived of all comfort, ſelf-eſtranged from a family to whom he was dear, from a paternal home, and from a country he loved, had pined among ſtrangers, in an obſcure village, abhorring his own exiſtence, and, no doubt, curſing her's.

The conſolations of friendſhip were at this moment vain: in vain was ſhe reminded of her ignorance of his fate, and the innocence of her intentions; his honour, his love, and his injuries, were before her; her own heart arraigned her, and ſhe declared her proſpects were ſhut in for ever.

Although the Duke was extremely afflicted, and indeed blamed himſelf for what had happened, he knew the dignified ſimplicity of Lady Denningcourt's ſoul; no injury, injuſtice, or calamity, by which ſhe could herſelf be the immediate ſufferer, would have ſo overwhelmed her with ſorrow, or ſo entirely deprived her of fortitude; but it was a ſenſe of wrong, of affliction, of agony, inflicted on another by her means, that only could reduce her to deſpair. She had, in this inſtance, been the ſource of miſery to one who was paſt reparation; ſhe had injured where no atonement could be offered; ſhe had offended where no pardon could be diſpenſed; ſhe had defaced her own

own image in the heart where it was worſhipped; and it was by her means the man of woes had died the man of wrongs.

To renovate her fortitude, and render her acceſſible to comfort, it was firſt neceſſary to reconcile her, in ſome degree, to herſelf. The Duke did not attempt to reaſon on what he knew ſhe conſidered as eſtabliſhed facts: he allowed Wallace Buhanun all the charms of perſon and mind ſhe inſiſted he poſſeſſed; but whatever were his virtues, he wanted the energy which can only do honour to the Creator: he knew, no doubt, what was right, but wanted reſolution to reduce knowledge to practice; and it was from his own weakneſs, not her's, all his misfortunes proceeded.—No logic can excuſe the deviation from moral rectitude, which could tempt a man to violate the law of hoſpitality, by encouraging in himſelf, or ſeeking to inſpire another with a paſſion deſtructive of the happineſs of his entertainer and benefactor. Love, he inſiſted, like vice, if oppoſed, would be conquered, and the firſt ſtruggle inſured victory; but, like vice alſo, the firſt lapſe was ſeldom—very ſeldom recoverable. "When, therefore, Wallace Buhanun, inſtead of reſiſting a faſcination, no doubt powerful, and ſeeding from the tempting ruin, indulged his preſumptuous wiſhes at the expence of the peace of his patron's family, he laid himſelf the foundation of that ruin which eventually overwhelmed him: he has ſuffered, but have not we alſo ſuffered? What a brother was mine!

mine! cut off by ſorrow in the meridian of his days; what a mother, what a ſon was loſt to the Houſe of Athelane! If you had *not* been the wife of Earl Denningcourt, could you have bound your ſoul to the man from whom the glory of our race, the young Dungaron, received his death-blow?"

"Do you call this conſolation, Duke?" ſaid Lady Hopely.

"I call it juſtice," he replied; "and Lady Denningcourt feels it."

"If it be juſtice, it is juſtice unblended with mercy, to charge on one ſo young and amiable a crime forced on him by the violence of others."

"Have I done this, niece? no, I trace the evil to its ſource; but I pity the victim—I am even ready to admit the puniſhment ſevere."

"Severe! ah, uncle! what muſt have been his feelings, his reſentment, his hatred of the cauſe! have you conſidered this?"

"I have conſidered there is in exiſtence a part of this unhappy man, which Heaven, in its mercy, ſpares, to give you the power of appeaſing your own ſelf-upbraidings. If you feel you have not requited the tenderneſs of the father, transfer it to his child; if you are conſcious of injuring him, though innocently, make the reparation to her; if your heart is unchangeable, love him in his offspring, acknowledge her openly in the face of the world. You cannot, perhaps, in law legitimate her; but what being of honour

honour or humanity will reſpect her or you the leſs on that account? ſhe has been long without a mother."

"Alas! my dear uncle, what a dreadful thought is that! does not the angry ſpirit of the father this moment charge me with that neglect of his child, which is the latent cauſe of her misfortune?"

"Appeaſe that angry ſpirit, then, by marking the wiſdom, the juſtice, the mercy of an overruling Providence:—the father reſcues an infant Beggar from all the horrors of wretchedneſs at the very place where, unknown to him, his own child reſides; that Beggar lives to reſtore the daughter of her benefactor to a bleſſing more dear than life! Ha! ſee, Lady Denningcourt (leading her to the window) there is your child, the child of him for whom you mourn; ſhe has been worſe than dead—a miracle is wrought in her favour; her reaſon, dreadful to thought, has been taken from her—it is returning, but her mother is inſenſible to the bleſſing—"*her proſpects are ſhut in for ever.*"

"It is indeed my child! ſhe hangs on the arm of her friend; ſhe looks compoſed! God be praiſed! But ah, uncle! how is it that this happy Beggar—happy, ſince beloved by Wallace Buhanun—how is it that ſhe bears his image ſo exact? I once thought—but I hated myſelf——"

The Duke underſtood the hint—it had occurred to himſelf; but her age was the proof of the Colonel's faith to his then loved Elinor.

"Look,"

"Look," cried Lady Hopely, "Elinor ſtops; ſhe looks up—dear creature, ſhe curtſies. Won't you go down? I proteſt I muſt."

The Duke thought they had better leave her to her friend. Lady Denningcourt kiſſed her hand, and retired from the window, if not conſoled by the Duke's arguments, at leaſt convinced they were juſt.

Roſa had the comfort now to be fully recognized: they walked in the park full two hours, and then Elinor wiſhed to return to the *boudoir*.

"You will hate me, Roſa," ſaid ſhe, as ſhe entered.

"Hate you! hate my Elinor! impoſſible!"

"I fear you will when you know all, becauſe I hated myſelf, and had no friend near me; but you are come at laſt; if you had been here—but now you are here, will you make my poor aching heart eaſy? I have been very ill; ſorrow was like a great ſea before me, and I ſaw no way to eſcape drowning: but if you would tell me one thing, it would do me almoſt as much good as ſeeing you."

"Need I ſay, my Elinor?"

"Oh, no! you need only tell me, and don't deceive your poor Elinor, what have they done with the poor boy?"

Betty, who choſe to know every thing, was ignorant in this point; and Roſa anſwered, with heſitation, "I will not deceive you, but I really do not know."

Elinor

Elinor ſhrieked. "Then he is dead—they tied him to the chariot wheels—he is killed!" Her hands relaxed, her eyes fixed on the ground, and ſhe relapſed into gloom and ſilence.

"There, now," cried Betty, "did ever mortal ſee the like! ſhe is in her ſulks again!"

The doctor, more ſure of her perfect recovery from ſhort relapſes, again adviſing Roſa to leave her, ſhe retired to her chamber, with no time, as Betty gravely aſſured her, to make her toilet before dinner, for that the warning bell would ring in half an hour, when the ladies always aſſembled in the drawing-room. For her part, it took her near double the time to do her hair only, and therefore ſhe knowed it was unpoſſible for any body to make themſelves decent in half an hour.

CHAP.

CHAP. VII.

Shewing, among other marvellous and incredible things, that ſome *of the exiles from Scotland are pleaſed to return thither.*

FEW ladies diſpatched the orgies of the toilet with more ſkill, or in leſs time, than Roſa; ſhe was not only dreſſed with her uſual elegant neatneſs before the warning bell rung, but had a few minutes left for wonder and reflection.

John would now, ſhe certainly thought, be on his journey to Edinburgh: ſhe had not the leaſt idea of any law, but that law of right and wrong God has implanted in the nature of the moſt ignorant of mankind; yet ſhe doubted whether an acknowledged daughter of Colonel Buhanun's, of whoſe exiſtence he was evidently ignorant, would not ſuperſede any other claim, even if the will, ſo firmly inſiſted on by John, and denied by Sir Solomon Muſhroom, exiſted. Had the property, conſiderable as it was, been veſted in her, it would have been no queſtion; but, however the guardians of the heirs, and the protector of Elinor might agree, the reward of John's faithful attachment to his maſter was certain; and as Betty did not juſt now deſerve to be ſharer in the ſatisfaction ſhe felt on that account, that poor unfortunate woman

man was ſuffered to bewail poor John Brown's loſt leg, his poverty, and ſilly ſtuff out of old books, while ſhe officiouſly aſſiſted Roſa to dreſs, without one word of comfort.

At length, the ſignal being given, Roſa haſtened down, and after paſſing the boudoir, where Elinor remained in the ſame humour and poſition, entered the drawing-room. The Duke, the two Counteſſes, and the young ladies, were already aſſembled.

Lady Denningcourt ſat near a window, her woman ſtanding behind her with her fan and ſalts. Roſa wiſhed to ſpeak, but had not power.

The Counteſs viewed her attentively; and while a tear ſtrayed down her pale cheek, motioned her woman to reach a chair, and, beckoning to Roſa, drew it near her own.

"Do not apprehend, Miſs Walſingham," ſaid ſhe, "that the obligation I owe you on my Elinor's account, can be leſs binding becauſe God has ſtamped his moſt perfect image on your countenance, or that I ſhall regard you leſs becauſe you were diſtinguiſhed by the huſband of my unalterable affection; ah, no, amiable, lovely girl, beware how you make any requeſt to me which I ought not to grant, ſince I know, I feel I cannot reſiſt any thing enforced by the animated expreſſion ſo dear, ſo familiar, and ſo irreſiſtible."

Roſa was tranſported; ſhe wept—her ſobs were audible; and when the intereſting Counteſs again embraced her, ſhe fell at her feet.

From this hour Elinor was the acknowledged daughter of the Counteſs of Denningcourt, the grand niece of the Duke of Athelane; and from this hour alſo our heroine rivalled her in the affections of her mother, and totally eclipſed her in thoſe of the Duke.

The amiable, generous, and diſintereſted Miſs Angus was a true Athelane; her fortune was large and independent; and had the whole of her future expectations vaniſhed when Elinor was acknowledged, ſhe would have been happy.

Not ſo Miſs Bruce; the head of that poor young lady, againſt every ſort of probability, ſtill run on Mr. Angus and a ducal coronet;—ſhe had but two ſolid comforts at this moment to ſupport her under a million of mortifications; firſt, that Miſs Athelane never would be reſtored to her perfect ſenſes;—ſecond, that Mr. Angus had never ſeen the enchanting Miſs Walſingham; and theſe, like many other of the ſolid comforts which ſhort-ſighted mortals grapple to their hearts,

"Like ſnow that falls upon the river,—
"Once white, then melts away for ever."

Of this, however, ſhe had ſo little apprehenſion, that while the tear of ſympathy filled every other eye, her dull ones were running over the newſpapers in ſearch of the ſcandal of the day.

"Have you any thing new, Margaret?" aſked Lady Hopely.

"You ſhall judge, Ma'am."

"*The*

" *The Lady, who, rather prematurely, calls herſelf* " *Counteſs Dowager of Gauntlet, was, we are informed,* " *yeſterday at Court; the difficulty about her reception* " *was got over on account of her venerable father, whoſe* " *age and former ſervices commanded reſpect.*"

" That may be new, Miſs Bruce, but it is not truth," ſaid Lady Denningcourt.

" True! No, certainly, Ma'am; one never expects truth in the ſmall talk of a newſpaper."

" If I were Lady Chancellor," rejoined Lady Hopely, " I would move to manage that buſineſs otherwiſe."

" You would not reſtrain the liberty of the preſs, Counteſs?"

" No, Duke; I would only ſtop the licentiouſneſs of it."

" I don't exactly ſee how one end, however deſirable, is to be attained, without attacking the other more valuable one."

" Nothing more eaſy:—truth, they ſay, is a libel; now truth ſhould *not* be a libel; I would tolerate the preſs in all ſorts of truiſms; but for thoſe deſpicable wretches who trade with the feelings of individuals, who eat, drink, and wear the peace of private families, who make anguiſh their ſport, and murder character —I would invent a torture worſe than thoſe they inflict, if that were in nature."

" That would be a little cruel, Lady Hopely, for you would poſſibly oblige a number of very daſhing

fellows, who are equally aſhamed to 'dig' or 'beg,' to take purſes."

"I ſhould then deſerve well of my country, by exalting them in the only way they can be exalted for the benefit of the public."

"Here, here," cried Miſs Bruce, "the paragraph is contradicted in both the evening papers."

"Read, Margaret, before the contradiction is contradicted."

Miſs Bruce read:—"*We are authorized to contradict "the paragraph in a morning paper, relative to the "appearance at Court of the lady, whom it is ſcarcely "premature to ſtile Counteſs Dowager of Gauntlet.— "The gallant veteran, her father, Admiral Herbert, "preſented his grandſon, and was honoured with a "long audience in the cloſet; but his daughter was not "preſent.*"

Lady Denningcourt would have been ſurpriſed if ſhe had; "if the ſon," ſhe continued, "has not better proof of his claims than the exiſtence of his mother, our neighbour will not be uncounteſſed."

Miſs Angus thought him very handſome; and Lady Hopely, who had often met him, very clever.

The Duke, who had not been in London the laſt winter, knew little of the ſtory.

There were ſomewhere among her father's papers, Lady Denningcourt thought, a very intereſting account of his poor mother, the late Counteſs.

"Late

"Late Counteſs!" Lady Hopely was ſure ſhe was living.

Lady Denningcourt was certain ſhe was drowned when the Vallerton yacht was loſt.

"Then, depend upon it, that horrid Earl was married to two wives," ſaid Lady Hopely; "for I am certain that this young man's mother is forthcoming."

"We ſhall ſee," replied Lady Denningcourt, with an incredulous look.

Every ſyllable of this converſation made its way to Roſa's heart; her ſeat grew uneaſy; the newſpapers were read out, but ſhe heard nothing more, till rouſed from a deep reverie by the movement of the company to the eating ſaloon.

Elinor's gloomy fit ſtill continuing, the ladies left the Duke, Chaplain, and Doctor over their bottle, and withdrew into the muſic room. Miſs Bruce ran her thick-ended fingers over Miſs Angus's harp, and ſnapped a ſtring in a moment.

Margaret Bruce, Lady Hopely ſaid, was always talking nonſenſe, or doing miſchief, except when ſhe was making caricatures, or bad verſes.

Miſs Bruce was awkwardly trying to repair the accident.

"Shall I aſſiſt you?" aſked Roſa.

"Do you know how?"

"I will try."

"There's a good ſoul;—Lady Hopely," ſhe whiſpered, "is always making bad worſe, and Angus will be ſo angry!—Why you have done it already!"

Roſa ran her taper fingers over the ſtrings juſt as Miſs Angus entered.

"You are obliged to Margaret, I aſſure you, Angus," cried Lady Hopely; "ſhe put your harp out of tune on purpoſe to let you know Miſs Walſingham is a ſcientific performer; but I have heard of her harp and her grand piano-forte; they were ſet to roup, and ſold."

"Sold!" and Roſa coloured.

"Juſt ſo:—Doctor Cameron bought them."

Miſs Angus was delighted to hear Roſa could play. She performed very ill herſelf, ſhe ſaid, but hoped to improve.

Lady Denningcourt left her ſeat, and aſked Roſa to play one leſſon. Never was requeſt made with more intereſt, and complied with with more grace;—the attractions of the muſic were ſtronger than the bottle—the gentlemen entered.

"I cannot underſtand," ſaid Lady Denningcourt, "how you have attained ſo many accompliſhments at a country boarding-ſchool."

"The conductreſs of that boarding-ſchool," Roſa replied, her cheeks tinged with generous energy, "was herſelf an adept in every ſcience taught under her roof; my ſtory intereſted her;—I owe more than words can pay to her particular care."

"Vaſily

"Vaſtly well, Miſs Walſingham; Mrs. Harley," the Duke ſaid, "could not wiſh for a more able eulogiſt."

"Beſides this advantage," reſumed Roſa, "I awoke from my golden viſion in time to make thoſe accompliſhments uſeful which I began for ornament; and the harp being ſubject to accidents, I learned to tune well from neceſſity; I found this very uſeful. Some of the ladies, Miſs Athelane in particular, never touched her harp without——"

"Miſs Athelane!" Lady Denningcourt never underſtood ſhe could touch it at all.

"She may have neglected it—ſhe was ſo indulged."

"Indulged! was ſhe ſo much indulged? and was that Dr. Croak really fond of her?"

"No young lady in the ſchool had ſo fond a father."

"Indeed! Have we not been too hard on this poor man, Duke?"

"What, becauſe while he cheated her of her little fortune, he indulged her improperly? Does it not ſtrike you, that if you had not been in a ſituation to claim her, ſhe muſt eventually have been reduced to the indigence from which her father reſcued this charming girl; had ſhe been properly managed, ſuch as Miſs Walſingham is, ſhe would have been."

Roſa, though ſhe knew Elinor's deficiencies were not the conſequence of neglect, could ſay nothing on

the ſubject, and therefore, vexed ſhe had begun it, ran over the ſtrings of the harp to change it.

Miſs Walſingham could ſing, Miſs Angus was ſure.

Roſa did not affect to diſclaim a talent ſhe was conſcious of poſſeſſing in a ſuperior degree.

Well, if Miſs Bruce wrote a novel, Miſs Walſingham ſhould be her heroine; ſhe had all the requiſites.

Lady Hopely adviſed her not to attempt it—ſhe would only ſpoil a good ſtory.

"Some people might perhaps think," ſaid Miſs Bruce, with pique, "I could embelliſh a bad one."

"Then they would neither know you, nor the ſtory," replied Lady Hopely.

"A ſong, dear Miſs Walſingham," cried Miſs Angus.

"To end the battle of tongues," ſaid Lady Hopely.

A ſudden thought ſtruck Roſa; ſhe removed the harp cloſe to the open window, and ſung an air from Orpheus, which was ſo great a favourite with Mrs. Harley, that every child in her ſchool played and ſung it; at the ſecond repetition of "Eurydice," Elinor and Dido haſtily left the boudoir; the former ſeated herſelf by Roſa's ſide, and the latter lay at her feet.

When the air was ended, Elinor looked round, and meeting the humid eye of Lady Denningcourt, haſtily aroſe, and kneeled before her.

"Heaven

"Heaven bleſs my dear child!" ſaid the Counteſs, ſtifling her emotion.

Elinor then returned to Roſa.

"How governeſs Harley loved to hear you ſing that ſong, Roſa!"

"And ſhe loved to hear *you* ſing it too, Elinor."

"Poor governeſs Harley! ſhe is dead I think?"

"No, my dear, only a little indiſpoſed."

"Ah that Penry! once I loved Penry; did not you, Roſa?—but every body is either ill or loſt there."

"No, my dear Elinor, you wrong poor Penry, all our friends there are well."

"All, Roſa?—not *all*."

"All I recollect; Sir Solomon Muſhroom I ſaw yeſterday; his daughter——"

"Do you call them friends, Roſa?"

"Then Doctor Croak and Mrs. Bawſky—I have ſeen them too; they are in the houſe where you left them. And your Roſa, you ſee, is neither ill nor loſt. As to the doctor's ſon——"

Elinor trembled.

"He," joined the Duke, "is returned to his father."

"Our Father which art in heaven," whiſpered Elinor, ſtill trembling.

"No, my deareſt Elinor, be aſſured he is not with his heavenly Father."

"Upon your honour, Roſa, is he not killed?"

"Oh no, my dear love!" ſaid Lady Denningcourt, "take it on *my* honour he is well and happy; you will not doubt *my* word?"

"Oh no, Madam, I dare not; and if you ſay he is well, and——but that cannot be; he cannot be happy, not quite happy, that I can't expect; but if he is not dead, not killed, not tied to the chariot wheels" —and ſhe put her hand to her head—"Oh how my temples beat!"

"And ſo do mine, my dear; let us walk into the air."

Elinor looked anxiouſly at Lady Denningcourt for permiſſion.

"Wherever you pleaſe, my love; this charming young lady is your friend, your gueſt; you muſt do the honours of your houſe."

"As I uſed to do at—at——"

"At Penry, or Walbrook;—and when you are weary of walking, you know you have a carriage:—be happy, my Elinor, and you will make us all ſo."

Elinor curtſied, and joining Roſa, they ſtrolled round to the other front, and walked under ſhade of the oaks till the evening bell rung, when the two friends returned arm in arm.

From this day Elinor became every hour more rational; her intellects ſtrengthened as her health improved; and as the power of recollection was ſweetened by the moſt aſſiduous and tender friendſhip; as ſhe was countenanced in the ſplendid ſtile of living,

ſo

ſo new and embarraſſing, by the preſence of that friend with whom ſhe had lived in the trueſt affection and moſt unlimited confidence; by whom ſhe was ſoothed, flattered, and encouraged into a ſenſe of the reſpect due to her protectreſs, whether mother or aunt, as well as to the noble family whom ſhe was led to conſider as her own; and, above all, as Lady Denningcourt aſſured her that young Croak had returned uninjured to his father, and that ſhe would conſider his eſtabliſhment in life as her own particular concern, the mind of the poor girl became in a very few days ſo calm, that the Duke looked forward with renovated hope to an event, which Miſs Bruce ſtill inſiſted never would, never could take place.

Roſa did not fail to avail herſelf of the Duke's permiſſion to attend him at ſix in the library; where ſhe pleaſed, gratified, and affected him by a frank detail of all the leading events of her life, excepting only her attachment to Montreville.

The Duke, with that true dignity of ſoul which influenced all his actions, confeſſed himſelf humbled by her ſtory; it proved, he ſaid, that the offspring of a beggar, with a good natural underſtanding, and proper tuition, might ſoar as far out of the ken of her equals, as the child of a Prince, leſs happy in either, might ſink beneath her's.

He rejoiced that his nephew was neither the huſband nor ſeducer of Kattie Buhanun. In the firſt inſtance, he could never have pardoned him for uniting

himſelf honourably to a daughter of Caſtle Gowrand; in the laſt, the ſeduction of innocence was an act he never could have forgiven himſelf; ſo much, indeed, was it the wiſh of the family to ſee the heir apparent married, that he might have choſen the daughter of the pooreſt gentleman in Scotland without fear of offending them, provided only that gentleman was not a Buhanun.

He applauded Roſa for the intereſt ſhe took in the fate of the unfortunate miſtreſs at the caſtle, but objected to her oſtenſible interference; he would himſelf, he had the goodneſs to ſay, get every neceſſary information concerning her; and before Betty came to ſummon her to Elinor, who was already inquiring for her Roſa, he appointed her to come to him at the ſame hour any morning ſhe pleaſed, when he would make her acquainted with the ſad events that conſigned the grand-daughter of a Duke of Athelane to the misfortune of imbibing the manners, ſentiment, and intereſt ſo uncongenial to her rank, as thoſe of Doctor Croak.

Elinor was rational and collected; ſhe wiſhed Roſa to breakfaſt with her, and afterwards to walk, as they had done the day before. They were ſeen from her window by the delighted mother, and inſtead of dropping a curtſey, immediately went to her chamber.

That ſhe was received with tranſport, that every ray of returning reaſon was a fund of happineſs to the family, cannot be doubted; neither, if Roſa's ſole merit

merit had been that of reſtoring the mental faculties of Lady Denningcourt's only child, need it be ſaid her future life, in reſpect to an ample proviſion, would have been perfectly eaſy? but her amiable diſpoſition, pleaſing manners, and accompliſhments, endeared her ſo much, particularly to Lady Denningcourt, and ſuch was the ſecret pleaſure ſhe took in tracing the likeneſs of her beloved Wallace, that, wiſhing to conceal an exceſs ſhe could not repel, ſhe reſtrained thoſe careſſes in company with which ſhe loaded her in private.

The Duke had preſſed his niece to viſit Athelane, and Lady Hopely was equally urgent to obtain her company to Edinburgh;—the apology for declining both, Elinor's derangement, was now done away—ſhe was now convaleſcent; the objection therefore removed, and the doctor approving of change of ſcene, Lady Hopely earneſtly renewed her invitation, and the Counteſs cheerfully accepted it.

One grand objection to the hurry Lady Hopely recommended, was the wedding at Delworth, where a perfect carnival was to be held for a week, and where all the genteel people within forty miles round were expected. Miſs Angus had, ſhe ſaid, half, and Miſs Bruce quite ruined herſelf in dreſſes for the ball *al freſco*; and theſe dreſſes could be of no ſort of uſe at the races, concerts, balls, or private parties Lady Hopely was anxious to join at Edinburgh.

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The Duke had the goodneſs to arrange the buſineſs to the ſatisfaction of all parties. "You cannot," ſaid he, "go to theſe balls *al freſco* without protection; and as I ſee no young knight ready to fight enchanters for you, ſuppoſe you will take up with an old one."

"You are poſitively the moſt beautiful, Duke, in the world," cried Miſs Bruce.

"Not," joined Miſs Angus, "but what a younger beauty might have done as well."

"Saucy enough;—but as no younger offers, I am inclined to wait for you, and ſo meet the ladies at Athelane."

"But a fearful thought ſtrikes me, uncle; though the cards are come, yet this wedding may not take place at the time, nor at all, and then we ſhall loſe both the charming things—the races and the balls."

"For this I know no remedy, but making a wedding and a ball *al freſco* of our own at Athelane, or two balls, and two weddings, if you can ſo contrive it; though, indeed, few of our own countrymen think better of a fine face for having grown ſtale in the South."

"Stale, uncle!"

"Stale, Duke!"

"Oh, barbarous! we, however, accept your knightſhip."

This being arranged, the two Counteſſes, Elinor, and, to her infinite joy, Roſa, prepared for their ſpeedy journey

journey to Edinburgh, where ſhe anticipated complete gratification.

She would once more embalm the memory of the Major with tears of grateful affection; once more viſit the dear burnſide, with the latent, though faint hope that the loved inhabitant of that enchanting retreat might have been heard of by ſomebody there;—yes, and ſpite of her ſtrong averſion to Mr. Simon Frazer, W. S. ſhe would preſs the ſweet Emma and Jeſſy to her heart;—then what pleaſure to meet the good, the friendly Doctor Cameron! and how happy would Mrs. Steward be at the change in her fortune!

Although Lady Denningcourt directed the two friends to have their clothes made exactly alike, Elinor, perfectly indifferent to the profuſion of ornaments prepared for herſelf, took infinite delight in aſſorting every thing for Roſa, carefully imitating the preciſion and exactneſs of Lady Denningcourt's woman in arranging her dreſſes; and as ſhe was happily buſy, ſhe was indulged even in placing them in the imperials.

But while the family at the jointure-houſe were engaged—one part of it preparing for a journey, the other for a carnival—what are the beautiful Counteſs and her gueſts about at Delworth?

> "Signing and ſealing's no part of our bliſs;
> "We ſettle our hearts, and ſeal with a kiſs;"

ſo ſays the old ſong, and it ſays well; but there were no ſuch ſummary doings at Delworth.

That lawyers, who have deeds of importance in their hands to finiſh, chuſe to liſten, with iron faces, to the anxiety of thoſe who urge them to diſpatch, thoſe who have deeds, and employ lawyers, need not be told. Lady Gauntlet and, we muſt not doubt, Lord Delworth, were almoſt diſtracted at the ſnail's gallop of Mr. Joſiah Turgid, the attorney of Sir Solomon Muſhroom, and Mr. Lemuel Supple, the attorney of her Ladyſhip.

No Miſs in Great Britain could be more ripe for a coronet than Miſs Muſhroom; no gentleman of a few years ſtanding, more willing to pay a good price for the bauble than Sir Solomon, her uncle; nor any family in the world more ready and willing to receive the purchaſe-money than the family of Earl Gauntlet; but ſtill the tardy lawyers were not ready; Mr. Supple, indeed, aſſured his noble clients, that he did his poſſible, but old Turgid was neither to be led nor driven.

"Nothing ever was ſo teaſing," cried Miſs Muſhroom; every thing was in waiting, even to the frames for the deſſert; every body invited, the day ſet, and ſtill no abſolute certainty; although nothing, it was allowed, but theſe teaſing lawyers could delay the happineſs of Lord Delworth and Miſs Muſhroom, and conſequently that of their reſpective families.

In this train of fretful felicity were the family at Delworth, when the carriages of the two Counteſſes and

and their ſuite, paſſed the porter's lodge in their way to Scotland.

Roſa, who, with Elinor and Betty, was in Lady Denningcourt's chaiſe, embraced her friend, and bleſſed the hour when ſhe had paſſed thoſe gates, ſince, through them, ſhe had found her dear Elinor, and the happy aſylum at the jointure-houſe.

"It was a very round-about way to our ouſe though Miſs," cried Betty; "but they ſay the nearer the church, the furder from God; and the furdeſt way about, the neareſt way home;—but, for my part, I don't like no round-abouts to ſuch devilditch places as Skotlun, for our ſtuart——"

"Pray, Betty, have you ever heard of your huſband?"

"To be ſure, Miſs Elinor; Miſs Roſy, I dare ſay, told you as he was comed home worſe nor nothen, and got no more nor one leg, a poor ignoramus of a man—and here now he is off again.—I am ſure what my ſufferens have been, God he knows; howſever, one ſwallow don't make a ſummer, ſo I ſhan't fret no more about nothen."

The road for ſome miles before Carliſle confirmed Betty in her idea of Skotlun, not having a buſh or a bramble to dry clothes on; but Roſa felt an indeſcribible ſenſation of pleaſure, when Lady Hopely's carriage ſtopped, and ſhe ſaid, "we are in Scotland." Ah, how different were now her feelings, and when laſt ſhe paſſed the boundaries of the two kingdoms!

It

It was juſt a year ſince, with a dejected mind, and diſordered body, ſhe left Scotland, with a ſentiment of native regret; if the proſpect before her was dreary, that ſhe had then left was no leſs ſo; yet ſhe feared the one, and regretted the other, and her heart ſunk as if going from an old home:—now it was lifted up in thankful joy; now it greeted the grand and ſublime before her with ſolemn pleaſure, and ſhe inhaled the pure air with ecſtaſy.

Lady Hopely had a fine houſe in Queen-ſtreet; what a delightful view of land and ſea did it command! even Elinor, though ſeldom affected by local objects, was ſtruck; and Betty cried out, as ſhe entered the hall, "Well, for my part! if our ſtuart has ever been in Skotlun, he muſt be a monſteracious tarrydiddle teller; is this the devilditch country where there is not a bramble nor a buſh to dry clothes! and when civilly accoſted by a number of clean healthy ſervants, each equally anxious to aſſiſt and oblige her, "Be theſe the proud upſtart nothenites? why ſure 'tis the gardin of heden!"

Lady Hopely was every where a gentlewoman; in her own houſe ſhe was magnificent; there was an air of hoſpitable grandeur in every thing ſhe ſaid or did; which, though familiar to Lady Denningcourt, charmed both our young friends.

When they took poſſeſſion of the apartments allotted them, Roſa ran delighted to the window; there was the Calton on the right, where ſhe had wandered many

many hours, and watered the green ſward with her tears;—there were the blue range of diſtant highlands which overhung the ſweet vale of Caſtle Gowrand;—there the wide expanſe of waters, with the ſwelling white ſail approaching the gradually narrowing Frith, on whoſe pellucid boſom the fortunes of many an induſtrious adventurer were borne:—the charming walk to the water of Leith;—the fields, the gardens, the caſtle—all, the eye took in all that had before charmed it; her heart recognized the very houſe on Leith walk, where goodneſs and humanity were enthroned in the heart of Mrs. Steward.

While theſe ſenſations of voluptuous delight paſſed in Roſa's mind, Elinor was buſy in arranging her clothes, her writing and drawing apparatus, and even placing her dreſſing-caſe on the toilet. Betty, Lady Denningcourt's woman, any body, or nobody, might attend on Elinor; the matter was of no concern to her—all ſhe was ſolicitous about was herſelf to wait on Roſa; and her ſpirits roſe or fell as ſhe was ſuffered to do it without interruption.

"You know, Roſa," ſhe would ſay, "when we were at ſchool, you never would play the maid, and I never would be the miſtreſs; they were happy, happy times; ſuppoſe us at play now—I could be content to play ſo my whole life."

The ladies who were on habits of friendſhip with Lady Hopely, waited for no cold cards of invitation; it was the friend they loved, not the lady they viſited, which

which brought them in crowds to her houſe; no affected ſtate, in ceremony's ungracious garb, returned them from the door. Lady Hopely is arrived, circulated through Edinburgh; the knocker was not a moment quiet; every body called, and every body were admitted; even after ſhe ſat down to dinner, and the table was crowded to the corners, ſhe could chat, laugh, and welcome her friends.

Lady Denningcourt's ſpirits were too languid to bear a ſcene of ſuch agreeable buſtle the whole evening; but as Lady Mary, Lady Betty, and Lady Suſan Hopely who, with their good and amiable father, had taken the direct road through Newcaſtle, when Lady Hopely went with her friend to Denningcourt, and had gone to a ſeat of the Earl's twenty miles from Edinburgh, and not expecting her ſo early, were not yet arrived, the Counteſs inſiſted the laſſes, as ſhe called Elinor and Roſa, ſhould aſſiſt her in entertaining her friends, and receive her daughters, who arrived before ſupper.

The Earl of Hopely was what includes every virtue, and every accompliſhment—a perfect *gentleman*; and if a cynic could diſcover any thing to alter in Lady Hopely, it would be in her huſband's preſence, ſince it was Lady, not Lord Hopely, who was every thing to every body.

The young ladies were lively, agreeable women, who, without any pretenſions to beauty, were more attractive than many firſt-rate toaſts.

The

The two ſtrangers were great objects of curioſity to the company; Lady Denningcourt's ſtory, which had been long conſigned to oblivion, revived, with the acknowledgment of her daughter; "She was a pretty enough girl;" but Miſs Walſingham was an angel.

Roſa's natural turn was a chaſte vivacity;—although ſhe had, ſince the Major's death, contracted a habit of gravity and reflection, the natural conſequence of the uncertainty and dependance of her ſituation, theſe were now, however, changed to the moſt happy confidence. The Duke, who admired the ſaying of Cæſar, "If I am to die to-day, that is what I am to do to-day," more than all his conqueſts, had deſired her to meet him in the library the morning they left Denningcourt, when he had ſhewn her a codicil to his will, executed in proper form, in her favour, though he had not yet made the promiſed communications of the misfortunes of the Athelane family.

In the poſſeſſion of ſuch manifold and unexpected happineſs, her friend ſitting placidly ſmiling by her ſide, could Roſa fail to be in ſpirits, when a crowded aſſembly of young people ſeemed only emulous to add to the pleaſure of each other, whoſe judgment of her was unanimous: Miſs Walſingham was the moſt beautiful, the moſt elegant, the moſt charming, the moſt accompliſhed, the moſt ſenſible, the moſt every thing woman could be; not a creature would have believed,

believed, had it been declared from the pulpit of the Trong church, that the poor beggarly thing, whom the naughty Major Buhanun had impoſed on his wife, as a relation of his family, and the divine Miſs Walſingham, was one and the ſame perſon.

After ſupper Roſa and Elinor ſtole up to Lady Denningcourt's apartment; ſhe was fatigued with her journey, and gone to reſt; ſhe nevertheleſs ſpoke to them; "My country ladies," ſaid ſhe, "know not what it is to be weary; Lady Hopely will not think of retiring; you are not yet Scotch laſſes, therefore don't ſacrifice health to any thing."

"If not to be weary will make me a Scotch laſs," replied Roſa, "I am already one.—Lady Hopely and her daughters are all life, and the company is delightful."

"Don't, however, let it delight you too much," ſaid ſhe; and after kiſſing them both, calling them her dear children, ſhe diſmiſſed them.

When they left the apartment, Elinor, throwing her arms round Roſa's neck, after extorting from her a promiſe to do what ſhe deſired, choſe herſelf to retire to reſt, but inſiſted Roſa ſhould return to the company.

Not the ſmalleſt trait of her late indiſpoſition remained about Elinor, except when any thing ſhe ſet her heart on was oppoſed. Roſa had obſerved this, and always cheerfully complied with all her little whims; ſhe therefore rung for Betty, and returned to

Lady

Lady Hopely, as ſhe deſired; and danced reels, or played on a piano-forte for others todance in turn, till midnight, when the company, after fixing innumerable parties for the enſuing week, ſeparated, in the higheſt ſpirits and good humour.

Roſa's dreams no longer placed her on precipices, trembling at the abyſs beneath; no longer tumbled her headlong into dark pits, or left her wandering in the mud without ſhoe or ſtocking; her eyes cloſed but to ſee viſions more pleaſing than even reality; Doctor Cameron enfolding her in the ſtrong arm of diſintereſted friendſhip; Emma and Jeſſy Buhanun hanging round her neck; the burnſide exactly as ſhe remembered it, with Mrs. Walſingham, the Major, and even her long-lamented Colonel Buhanun, grouped together there: then again the Gauntlet family and connexions without a Mrs. Woudbe—the Counteſs and her children grouped with Montreville and his friends—herſelf equally careſſed by both.

After ſuch dreams, could Roſa riſe with leſs beauty and leſs animation than ſhe went to reſt? reſt indeed ſhe had ſo completely enjoyed, that ſhe roſe at ſix, with all her animal ſpirits in the fulleſt float of exhilaration.

Elinor's dreams were leſs pleaſant, or her animal ſpirits, perhaps, not ſo ſoon reſtored. Only one or two ſervants were yet ſtirring. Roſa opened the ſaſh of her dreſſing-room. The objects ſhe greeted with ſo much pleaſure on her entrance, met her eye:

eye: ſhe ſnatched her hat, and, without a ſervant, darted, light as ſylph, to Leith walk.

"My maiſtreſs es nae gootten oop, Meſs," cried a damſel, who anſwered when ſhe rung at Mr. Steward's door.

"Where are the children?" replied Roſa, walking in; "tell Mrs. Steward an old friend——"

"It is Miſs Buhanun's voice," cried Mrs. Steward, ſtarting up.

"You are dreaming, woman," anſwered her huſband.

"I will truſt my recollection;—her's is a true Scotch voice; there is harmony in her monoſyllables; and Mrs. Steward ran half-dreſſed into her ſitting-room, where ſhe found it was indeed Miſs Buhanun; no longer the haraſſed unprotected being ſhe remembered her, but the elegant, eaſy, faſhionable looking gentlewoman.

The endearments of grateful regard on one ſide, and of warm feeling on the other, having ſubſided, and Mr. Steward, who, after having been diſturbed by his wife's dream, had turned, and fallen aſleep again, enquired after, Mrs. Steward would not have been ſurpriſed, ſhe ſaid, to find Roſa entirely under the protection of Lady Hopely; as, notwithſtanding the torrents of ſcandal which were every where propagated againſt her, after her departure from Edinburgh, the Counteſs had continued a ſtaunch and firm advocate; but the houſe of Athelane, with fewer claims on its

its fortune and affections, with all the known dignity of inborn ſentiment, princely extraction, high rank, and ſplendid fortunes, were, in point of honour and patronage, the firſt in the kingdom; and it was from Mrs. Steward our heroine now heard the particulars of the ſtory ſo often promiſed by Major Buhanun, and once begun by the Duke of Athelane.

Mrs. Steward did not remember Wallace Buhanun herſelf; but her father, who, like the Major, deſcribed him as the flower of his clan, handſome, courageous, honourable, and juſt, taught her early to weep over his diſaſtrous ſtory. The clan of Athelane imprecated the preſumption of young Wallace; the clan of Buhanun, inſiſting the blood of their chief was equally noble, although their fortune was ſunk, abhorred the local pride of the young Dungaron, and were far from regretting that he fell by the hand of the youth he had inſulted.

The inveteracy on either ſide was far from being appeaſed; and had the talked-of marriage of Mr. Angus, the heir of the Athelanes, with the eldeſt daughter of the heir of Buhanun, taken place, though that event might have appeaſed one ſide, it would have irritated the other. Well indeed it was that Mr. Angus, by returning to Edinburgh, and being conſtantly ſeen there the laſt autumn, winter, and ſpring, had done away the general ſuſpicion that he was Kattie's ſeducer, ſince ſome of the family ſtill remained, who, though they might not have felt them-

ſelves particularly implicated in her diſgrace from any other quarter, would have thought themſelves bound to revenge it on him.

Roſa had now the key to all Lady Denningcourt's conduct; that a child, the offſpring of the unfortunate pair, had been born, concealed by the late Duke, and now acknowledged by the ſurviving parent, was firſt whiſpered, then openly confirmed all over Scotland; and the intention of the Duke was alſo ſuſpected. This child was an intereſting object to all the relations of the late Colonel, and Mrs. Steward aſked a volume of queſtions about her.

Roſa gratified not only her curioſity, but her claniſh pride, by delineating Elinor with the warm colourings of friendſhip; after which ſhe had alſo her queſtions to aſk. Mr. Frazer had been as unfortunate in all his undertakings, ſince his marriage with the widow Buhanun, as his moſt implacable enemy could wiſh.—The widow was more deeply embarraſſed than even he could have ſuſpected, and he had not time to determine what to do with himſelf and her, before Lord Aaron Horſemagog was very ſorry to inconvenience Mr. Frazer, but he wanted to *lock up* his apartments, and Mr. Simon Frazer, W. S. had a ſcore of obligations ſerved on him by other W. S's. to give bail he would not leave Scotland.

Mr. Simon Frazer intended no ſuch thing, if he could poſſibly help it; ſo convening the creditors of the charming widow together, he aſſigned all her income

come for the payment of the debts, excepting only the houſe and lands of Caſtle Gowrand, where he made his wife ſo great an economiſt, as to keep the family on the milk, poultry, mutton, and corn the farm afforded, and allotted the money allowed for the children's board and education, one half for purchaſe of ſuch neceſſaries as were abſolutely needful, and the other to make a fund for his own private uſe, in caſe he ſhould have the misfortune to loſe his wife, whoſe comforts indeed were not of a complexion to inſure longevity.

Roſa could not help feeling exceedingly diſtreſſed at this account of the ſituation of her friend's family; the children ſhe conſidered as loſing all the accompliſhments ſhe had been ſo anxious to give them, and their mother actually ſinking under the accumulated evils of remorſe, mortified vanity, and hard living. She communicated to Mrs. Steward the information ſhe ſuppoſed Doctor Cameron muſt by this time have received from John Brown, and expreſſed her hope Mrs. Frazer's life might be rendered more comfortable from the conſiderable acquiſition of wealth in her family.

Mrs. Steward had heard nothing of this, yet ſhe had ſeen Doctor Cameron very lately; "and I need not," ſhe added, "I ſuppoſe ſwear to you that we have but one ſubject of converſation when we meet."

Roſa pauſed. The Duke's information was, that John did not return to the caſtle from Lady Denning-

court; ſhe therefore concluded he was gone to Edinburgh, and could not yet perſuade herſelf he would neglect a buſineſs of ſuch importance, whatever reaſon the Doctor might have for concealing it from Mrs. Steward. After two hours' delightful interchange of profeſſions of regard, Roſa returned to Queen-ſtreet, where ſhe found none of the family, except Lady Denningcourt, had yet left their beds.

As, in the regular routine of living at Denningcourt, as well as during the journey, Roſa's attention was almoſt excluſively paid to Elinor, it was from the Duke of Athelane Lady Denningcourt had heard the general anecdotes of her life; and when ſhe ſaw her enter her apartment with the bloom of health on her cheek, and triumph of ſenſibility in her eyes, ſhe concluded that her early viſit had been paid to a former friend, and congratulated her on the ſatisfaction viſible in her countenance.

Roſa had no natural reſerve about her; if ſhe had concealments, they were the effect of ſome unpleaſant or local circumſtances; but there was nothing to prevent her expreſſing to one, whoſe affectionate partiality increaſed every moment, her wiſh to pay a viſit to Mrs. Frazer and her family, and once more to behold the ſcene of former tranquil pleaſure on the burn-ſide. So far from oppoſing a deſire ſo natural and laudable, Lady Denningcourt declared ſhe envied the gratifications ſhe would receive.—"Ah! Miſs Walſingham," ſhe added, "there is a glen, a burn, a retreat,

treat, what would I not give to visit them with the delight you are about to feel! It is true you have lost one loved companion by death, another by change of circumstance; desolation has also visited it; but you are not the innocent cause. Go, my charming young friend, enjoy the first blessing of benevolence; visit the poor trifling victim to vanity—make her and her children little presents; leave an opening to the mercenary husband to suppose that your visits, or at least your presents, will be repeated; you will, by that means, insure them some few indulgences; you will find a fund sufficient for all in this pocket-book; but you are not to thank me—you are my deputy in this business. You know I appropriate a certain sum to acts of benevolence; perhaps you would doubt, if I did not vouch the fact, my fund exceeds the demands in the neighbourhood where an honourable regard to my word has cast my lot;—I came therefore to my own native land, the no less dear than fatal scene of woes that still rive my aching heart, provided to deserve the blessings of the poor;—not—mark Rosa, and do not feel what I can never mean, a reflection on you—not the hardy beggar, whose clamours wound the ear in the streets; not such as her who could abandon you; these are not *my* poor;—but the industrious unsuccessful artizan; the fond mother who can brave famine herself, if her young ones be fed;—the deserted orphan; the objects reduced with virtuous unsubdued pride from affluence to need, who

ſearch even in the looks of old connexion for the ſlight from which ſenſibility recoils; yes, Roſa, yes, and her too whoſe ingenuous confidence, or whoſe thoughtleſs vanity, like your Kattie, has brought to ſhame—and even thoſe who, like her more blameable mother, feel the "anguiſh of a too late experience," who literally ſwallow aſhes, and drink tears, in contraſting preſent miſery with former happineſs,

And grieve they have priz'd them no more."

Theſe are my poor, and that was your ſong; you regretted you had nothing more novel and faſhionable; but Shenſtone's ſonnets muſt always be felt;—and there is an uneducated man in this country whoſe ſoul is Shenſtonian, though his poetry do not ſtrike ſo much, becauſe it is not ſo poliſhed; but the Scotch plough-boy will delight you when you read him in the woods of Athelane, with a Scotch gloſſary by you, without which you cannot underſtand half his beauties. Am I not garrulous this morning? I fear I am; my heart, my dear child, expands when I look at you, and when I remember what a bleſſing you have reſtored to me. Oh Miſs Walſingham! you muſt know the weight of my ſelf-reproach, the anguiſh—but, praiſe Heaven, you *never can* know it.

Roſa ſat by the amiable ſpeaker, attentive and affected; ſhe kiſſed her hand, and her heart took the poſition in which ſhe was more than once ready to place her perſon—it was proſtrate before her.

"Uſe

"Uſe the notes as I recommend," continued the lady; "and as the races commence in two days, when every other amuſement will alſo commence, take your friend, Mrs. Steward, with you, and go to Caſtle Gowrand in a plain carriage—little minds are affected more with appearance than reality;—if you viſit that poor woman in the ſtate for which perhaps ſhe pines, ſhe will envy your lot, and lament her own, without once recollecting there is ſuch a thing as merit or providence in the affair."

"Oh, Madam! how good, how conſiderate you are to every body!"

"If you ſaw me in poſſeſſion of the bleſſings and power I do poſſeſs, would you not deſpiſe me if I thought only for myſelf? come, you are not good at compliments; if you mean really to flatter me, juſt ſay, and let it be truth, I have made *you* happy."

Roſa had no longer power to repel the impulſe of more than reſpect and affection; ſhe was on her knees, her white arms claſped round the Counteſs's waiſt, her fine eyes caſt upwards to her face, meeting her tender and agitated glances, and both in tears, when Elinor entered, and knelt beſide her.

"My child, my beſt girls!" ſobbed the Counteſs, "you muſt leave me; I am not well—I want air: ring for Willis, and leave me; I cannot join you at breakfaſt."

Roſa flew to the bell, and Elinor, with a face of wonder and concern at the repeated requeſt of the Counteſs, left the room with Roſa.

Lady Hopely and her charming daughters were by this time aſſembled; the young ladies had invitations and parties for the next week, which might take up at leaſt ſix months at a moderate calculation. Happy in their parents, their friends, and themſelves, the breakfaſt table was a ſcene of abſolute confuſion; they were all laughers, ſingers, and talkers—and it was ſcarce removed before the houſe was again thronged with viſiters.

Roſa and Elinor retired to dreſs; and before the buſineſs of the toilet was diſpatched, a note was ſent to Dr. Cameron, with Miſs Walſingham's requeſt to ſee him as ſoon as conveniert.

An Engliſh beauty in Edinburgh need only be ſeen to be generally talked of; Doctor Cameron had not ſeen her, but he was a hearer, though not a partaker, of the raptures the fair ſtranger inſpired.

"Miſs Walſingham!" ſaid he—"I have certainly heard that name; the young lady is perhaps ill after her long journey."

The carriage was at the door; he was going his rounds, and marked Queen-ſtreet on his memorandum card.

Roſa was ſtill in her dreſſing-room, the drawing-room thronged with company, when Doctor Cameron was announced:—ſhe was down in a moment.

The Doctor was gravely following a ſervant into the drawing-room, when Roſa threw herſelf into his arms, even before he had time to ſee it was the form he

he moſt admired on earth. The Doctor's eyes twinkled, his lips quivered, he turned pale, then red, and at laſt uttered, "Miſs Buhanun!"

It prudently ſtruck the ſervant, who was ſhewing the Doctor up, that a meeting ſo intereſting required no witneſſes; and he threw the door of an empty apartment open.

"Dear Doctor Cameron!"

"Dear, and ever dear Roſa Buhanun! how are you? where did you come from? What a dear unexpected pleaſure!" and the *et ceteras* of joyful exclamations between dear and long parted friends, at a ſudden meeting, being repeated over and over, Roſa was aſtoniſhed to find John Brown had never made his appearance in "Auld Reikie;" and the Doctor was as much, and agreeably ſurpriſed to hear the motive for his being ſent thither. A repetition of particulars, before heard from Mrs. Steward, reſpecting the Frazers, and thoſe Roſa had related to her reſpecting herſelf, followed.

The Doctor could neither contain nor expreſs his joy when he found ſhe was ſettled in the boſom of that family he had ſo ardently wiſhed to ſee her at the head of, although he made ſo dear a ſacrifice for that end; he confirmed the aſſertion of Lord Lowder's gentleman, relative to his following her to London, where he had the mortification to find, that the one paſſenger who alighted from the ſtage which carried Roſa from Edinburgh, was the houſe-maid of a

northern Baronet, who got into it near Durham; and certainly the Doctor and Mr. Angus, who was his companion in the inquiries after her in and about London, though aided by the hundred eyes of Argus, muſt have given up the chace, as it was literally impoſſible to find a perſon in London who was at the ſame time ſo buſy in Yorkſhire.

Roſa mentioned her intention of viſiting Caſtle Gowrand, and once more ſeeing the burnſide, where ſhe declared, if ever ſhe were rich, ſhe would erect an obeliſk in memory of the happy hours ſhe had paſſed there.

The Doctor gravely told her, ſhe might, if ſhe pleaſed, be rich enough to do that or any thing elſe; but he had much to ſay to her of very ſerious import; and though it was at this time inconvenient for him to leave Edinburgh, only for two days, he would have the pleaſure to eſcort her and Mrs. Steward in his own carriage, with poſt horſes, to Caſtle Gowrand; and he added, "Do not look ſo grave, for I am not going to make love to you, at leaſt on my own behalf."

This aſſurance was really a relief to Roſa; ſhe reſpected and loved the Doctor as a friend, and the moſt worthy of men, but her heart was not in a diſpoſition to admit ſentiments of a more tender nature—no, not if an Adonis had addreſſed her. She accepted his offer with a frank good-humoured ſmile; and as he was ſo kind as to take on himſelf the arrangements with

with Mrs. Steward, promiſed to be ready by five the next morning.

Lady Hopely rallied both the Doctor and Roſa on their private interview; and Elinor innocently aſked if that was really her lover, and if ſhe thought he was to be at all compared to poor Croak.

The Ladies Denningcourt and Hopely propoſed riding in the evening, while the young party walked; but Elinor, who never could diveſt herſelf of a ſtrong degree of *mauvaiſe honte*, wiſhed to accompany them; then, Lady Mary proteſted, Suſan ſhould not be her companion, for ſhe would have Miſs Walſingham with her.

"Roſa loves walking," replied Elinor, "better than riding, and ſo perhaps does Lady Suſan; now as I *muſt* go out ſomewhere, I prefer riding."

"Muſt, child," cried Lady Mary, "there is no muſt in any thing of the ſort; you may ſtay at home, and read the Bible, if you pleaſe; or what is as well, perhaps, look down on us in the promenade; you permit Miſs Athelane to do either, I hope, Lady Denningcourt?"

"No, Lady Mary," replied the Counteſs, coldly, and a little piqued at a certain contempt of Elinor's underſtanding, which ſhe thought ſhe perceived, "I have every diſpoſition to oblige my daughter, but I like her company, and cannot diſpenſe with it."

Lady Suſan then begged alſo to ride; and the Ladies Mary and Betty Hopely, with Roſa walking

between them, drew all the Edinburgh ſmarts after them in the promenade, while Lady Denningcourt took the opportunity of the ride to reconcile Elinor to the parting, for two days, from Roſa, which, with no ſmall difficulty, ſhe effected; and at five the next morning Roſa ſtepped into the ſame carriage which brought her from Caſtle Gowrand to Edinburgh, where ſhe was received by Mrs. Steward and her friend, the Doctor, and ſet off for Caſtle Gowrand.

CHAP. VIII.

A ſhort Chapter; containing a Propoſal of Marriage; a Memento Mori, and an unexpected Meeting.

DOCTOR CAMERON'S regard for Roſa was as warm and as generous as ever; he had, he told her, much to ſay, and Mrs. Steward's preſence was no reſtraint either on him or our heroine.

After adverting to his fruitleſs excurſion to London, he ſurpriſed her no leſs by naming his companion, than explaining the motives of the journey.

It was not merely Roſa's confidence and eſteem, but her admiration, which were rivetted by the Doctor's manner; he had left his home, riſked his prac-

tice, and, in some degree, his character; he had sacrificed the first and dearest wish of his soul; and, by a refined and delicate exertion of generosity, changed the fond desire of making her his own, to the more noble hope of seeing her beauty and virtue adorn a rank congenial to her high deserts; yet the reluctant sigh burst from his bosom, a drop of anguish stood on his cheek, while a flow of sensibility conquered his natural taciturnity; and though he pleaded against his own fond bias in favour of a rival, he enumerated, with energy, the many advantages that awaited her acceptance of Mr. Angus, whose passion, he declared, was so far from abating in fervour or sincerity, that all his hope of happiness depended on possessing her; to rank, affluence, and the power to do universal good, he added the person, accomplishments, and disinterested passion of one of the finest gentlemen of the age; the family, rich and liberal in all its principal branches, fondly devoted to this their last and only heir, and ready to receive to their hearts whatever contributed to his felicity; he besought her to consider that, in accepting the offer of his friend, she had no narrow prejudices to combat, no favour to solicit, no explanations to make—Mr. Angus loved her for herself; his own fine sense and taste were the best earnest of the value he would set on her's. "Observe," he continued, "the noble confidence of this gentleman; he knows you are dear to me—not perhaps how dear, for that is past comprehension; yet he commits to me the

the intereſt of his ſoul. You know his ſiſter;—all his female, as well as male, relations, are amiable; you were formed for them, and they for you; your heart is free—I muſt hope it is. Deareſt Roſa (and the good man's face lighted up with the heroiſm of his own conduct) make me happy—ſay you will be propitious to my friend."

Roſa had aſſured Doctor Cameron fifteen months ſince, her heart was free; but what revolutions have not taken place in female hearts in a leſs number of minutes! It is true, Montreville was unworthy; he no longer occupied every moment ſhe could detach from the world, nor was ſhe any longer anxious to prove him, by compariſon, ſuperior to all his ſex; and, on the contrary, Mr. Angus's character, though ſketched by a friend, could not be too high coloured; ſhe had heard innumerable inſtances of his goodneſs of heart, and generoſity of ſentiment, ſince ſhe had reſided in the family, and knew how important to them all, his happineſs and eſtabliſhment were; but ſhe was ſtill conſcious of a feeling for the unworthy Montreville, inimical to an attachment to any other man; and therefore the more amiable Mr. Angus, and the more honourable his offered alliance, the more ſhe was bound to decline a heart for which ſhe could not exchange her own.

Doctor Cameron waited her anſwer with beating heart, quivering lip, and averted eye; he trembled at the gentle hem! which preceded her reply, and involuntarily

luntarily relinquiſhed the loved hand, which, in the open confidence of friendſhip, he had been permitted to retain, while, with feelings not eaſy to define, he heard her firmly declare her high ſenſe of the honour Mr. Angus offered, and the utter impoſſibility of her accepting it.

The taſk of honour and friendſhip was performed; he had pleaded for another with more zeal than he could do for himſelf; well, ſhe declined diſpoſing of that hand, that heart, dearer to him in that moment than ever, and might he not indulge the ſecret pleaſure of reflecting he was ſtill free to love, to adore her?

Yet could he thus give up the intereſt he had adopted—the hope of ſeeing the idol of his ſoul as ſuperior in rank as in beauty?—No, Doctor Cameron ſtill loved; but his was the love of urbanity, of honour, and of ſentiment: his ſhe would not be; and was ſhe not in a world where the protection of beauty is the deſtruction of virtue, where the Gauntlets, the Woudbes, the Lowders, were ready to elbow the few Roſas ſprinkled up and down the earth out of exiſtence: Oh! why then, blind equally to intereſt and danger, would ſhe reject a good ſo certain and unequivocal?

Thus in effect reaſoned Doctor Cameron during a ſix hours' ride with Roſa, whoſe adherence to her firſt declaration might ſurpriſe, might hurt him; but he was ready to devour the hand ſhe replaced in his, when, with an air and voice that made him giddy,

ſhe calmly ſaid, "After having told you, my dear friend, my heart cannot be a party in this treaty, what would you think of your grateful Roſa if ſhe yielded that to rank, riches, ſplendour, or intereſt, which ſhe had before refuſed to intrinſic merit and modeſt worth like your's."

The Doctor could not ſpeak, neither could he truſt his eyes: had there been a poſſibility of kneeling with three people in a ſmall chaiſe, that he would certainly have done: as it was, he had nothing for it but thruſting his head out of the window, and meditating on the wonders of a narrow lane; after which, till the chaiſe ſtopped at the gate of Caſtle Gowrand, the ladies had the chat all to themſelves, for the Doctor obſerved a profound ſilence.

The Doctor's ſervant rang the bell, as ſervants, who think much of the conſequence of their maſter, and more of their own, generally do—loud and long; and no anſwer being returned, he repeated his ring till the wire, which was ruſty, from want of uſe, broke, when the Doctor alighted, and with ſome difficulty puſhed open the gates. The chaiſe then drove up to the door; but was this Caſtle Gowrand! was this the court-yard, now overgrown with long graſs, where the wheels of gay equipages once rolled inceſſantly! were theſe green ſlippery ſteps the ſnow-white entrance to the lightſome, though ancient hall! Heavens! the windows, once clear as the mountain ſpring, hung with drapery curtains, ſhaded by Venetian blinds,

and

and ornamented with birds and flowers, are all now close shut up!

Rosa turned pale, and Mrs. Steward red; the former thought some calamity had visited poor Mrs. Frazer or her children—perhaps both; the latter, that Frazer had cheated every body, and run away.

The Doctor had in the meanwhile entered by the back-door into the house; but no answer being returned to his loud knock and call, he found his way to the front door, and having unbolted, unbarred, and unlocked it, encouraged the ladies to enter, as it was plain there were inhabitants belonging to the house, for a pot was over the kitchen-fire with barley broth, and a lean cat lay on the hearth.

Rosa, who well knew every part of the house, opened one door after another; the furniture were all in their places, but evidently out of use, except one small parlour, and two bed-chambers; and in one of the latter, to her infinite joy, hung two robes she had made for Emma and Jeffy.

As this proved that the family still resided there, the Doctor, recollecting that Mr. Frazer farmed the land, thought it very possible his wife and her daughters were helping to get in the harvest.

Rosa started. "What do you say, Doctor? the relic of Major Buhanun!"

It was Frazer's wife he spoke of.

"His children, then?"

The

The Doctor's lip quivered. "If Miss Buhanun wished to visit the burnside, the afternoon was fine—and (he added firmly) we shall see the children of our deceased friend at our return."

"I promised myself a melancholy pleasure in this excursion," said Rosa; "melancholy I do indeed feel it; and God knows what portion of pleasure it will afford!"

They proceeded towards the burnside—every step renewing some scene of past pleasure or pain;—how often, hanging on the Major's arm, as she now did on the Doctor's, delighting and delighted, the lovely girls running now before, and now behind, too volatile for a regular pace, had she passed these fields! There was the widow Jonston's wee hoose, where poor Janet Ferguson died, lamenting her "pure Donald," her "bonnie child;" and here the craggy path through the glen, now bordered with primrose and wild strawberries, which she had last passed with beating heart, every step impeded by relics of the fatal storm that desolated the burnside. This was the point which, when first turned, astonished and delighted her, when last—Oh! how sad, how bitter the contrast!—and now——

"Eh Lorde!" cried Mrs. Steward, "what a heap of people by the side of yon burn!"

"There's Frazer and his wife," said the Doctor, "and my two wards."

"And

"And who are thoſe nearer the glen?" aſked Mrs. Steward.

"No matter," cried Roſa, as ſhe quickened her pace round the corner.

The walks were clean; and though not bordered with exotics, the air was ſcented by the native flowers.

"This Mr. Frazer has ſome taſte," cried Roſa; "but what (ſtarting back) is this?"

The Doctor was already trying to gueſs.

At the exact place where the wicket, which led to the wee hooſe formerly ſtood, was a black marble pedeſtal, with a ſquare tablet on the top, on which was engraved—

DONALD FERGUSON,
the honeſt owner and inhabitant
of this humble ſpot,
was,
by the providence
of GOD,
tranſlated from his happy dwelling
on the burnſide
into the preſence
of Him
to whom only his integrity
was known.
Peace to the memory of a man of worth!

"Oh, Doctor! this muſt be you!"

"I ſhould have been too proud to conceal it."

"Has Frazer then, after all, a ſoul?"

"We

"We ſhall know preſently. There his body ſtands, ſo intent on ſomething in the angle of the glen, he does not obſerve us."

Roſa dropped a tear on the tablet, and proceeded down the winding path, which concealed the burn a few paces from their view; but when again, by a ſudden turn, they came near, ſurpriſe ſtopped both the Doctor and Roſa, while Mrs. Steward exclaimed, "Eh! what is that?"

In the midſt of cluſters of trees, which formerly ſheltered the cold-bath, a white marble obeliſk was ſeen, the top of which roſe in a ſpiral form through the foliage.

"Here," ſaid the Doctor, "is the emanation of another ſoul; but it cannot be Frazer's."

Roſa eagerly advanced. A double row of weeping willows, interſperſed with laurels of infantile growth, were planted round the front next the burn; the back was incloſed by the rock, and tall trees grew cloſe on each ſide.

The Doctor perceived the ſhade of a female figure, and drew back.

Roſa had not obſerved any thing but the extraordinary object ſhe was bent on viewing nearer, and entered the incloſure.

The baſe of the obeliſk was ſquare, and, like the top, white marble; and as ſhe perceived engravings on all ſides, ſhe drew quite cloſe, putting back ſome

of

of the foliage to give light. On a ſcroll, running up the marble was—

Plant the high column o'er the vacant grave,
An hero's honour let an hero have.

On the flat in front—

Sacred to the memory
of
MAJOR BUHANUN:
the early part of whoſe life
was devoted to the ſervice of his
King,
and the defence of his
Country;
and
the latter
to
the honour of his
MAKER:

On one ſide—

To him
who lived and died in the practice of
doing juſtice,
loving virtue,
and
walking humbly before
GOD.

On the other ſide—

Before ſhe could read the other ſide, a deep ſigh, ſounding from behind, ſtartled her; a voice, evidently ſuppreſſed by tears, uttered a few inarticulate words—"Beſt of men! this laſt tribute"—was all ſhe could underſtand.

underſtand. A tall elegant figure roſe from her knees, ſlowly advanced, and paſſed her; ſhe was dreſſed in a grey ſilk robe, a white beaver hat, and a deep black laced veil. Roſa felt an hyſterical affection riſing in her throat; ſhe followed the female figure, who, ſuppoſing Mrs. Frazer or one of her daughters had intruded on her privacy, threw back her veil, and turning round with an air of diſpleaſure, beheld the almoſt fainting Roſa; who, the moment the veil was raiſed, darted forward, ſhrieking "Mrs. Walſingham! Oh, ever beloved and reſpected, is it you?"

If, inſtead of Mrs. Walſingham herſelf, it had been her ghoſt, or the Major's ghoſt, or Donald's ghoſt, or all their ghoſts together, the author flatters herſelf ſhe could, with a little of her own, and a great deal of other people's fancy, have worked up a ſcene intolerably terrific;—but as it really was a corporeal ſubſtance, though animated by the eſſence of purity; as it was the meeting of two women of congenial ſpirits, after a long and painful ſeparation, whoſe attachment to each other was the attraction of ſimilar virtues, whoſe affection was founded on honour, and cemented by ſenſibility, thoſe who could feel the tranſports of ſuch a meeting themſelves, will conceive more than the author can write; thoſe who could *not*, will readily paſs on to the next chapter.

CHAP.

CHAP. IX.

Shewing how a handſome Widow may change for the worſe; how a young Lady may change her mind; and how the myſtery of the back-ſtairs was diſcovered.

MRS. Walſingham's promiſed letter to Major Buhanun coming to Mrs. Frazer's hands, ſome time after her ſecond marriage, was too flagrant an expoſure of her unjuſt folly, to be anſwered.

The Major's death, of which, with the family anecdotes Mrs. Walſingham heard from a perſon who went expreſſly to Scotland for the purpoſe of inquiring for Roſa, was a blow on her heart, againſt which Chriſtian fortitude could, in the inſtant, do nothing; and her regret was the more poignant, as every inſtance of his undeviating honour and friendſhip, which recurred to her recollection, were embittered by the certainty, that grief for her ſuppoſed death had accelerated his own; and though the impoſſibility of tracing Roſa, and the imprudence of Kattie, would at any other time have given her a ſenſible affliction, they were at this moment only ſubordinate evils; her health became affected, and ſhe was in a low nervous feveriſh habit, when letters from Liſbon,

in

in anſwer to thoſe announcing her exiſtence, implored her to take the very voyage her phyſicians preſcribed, and viſit the Superior of the Order of Mercy; the ſame letters ſtated, that Don Joſeph Tavora Alvarez had juſt lived long enough, after hearing ſhe ſtill ſurvived, to leave her the accumulations of her grandfather's fortune from the time of his death, and all his own perſonals; the eſtate, as well as his own, he bequeathed to her ſon; and as Lady Aurelia moſt anxiouſly deſired to ſee her, Magdalena was accompanied on the voyage by her father's friend, Captain Seagrove, leaving every neceſſary document to prove her marriage, with her ſon, whoſe preſence was thought neceſſary in London.

The winter at Liſbon re-eſtabliſhed her health; put her in poſſeſſion of immenſe wealth, and meliorated her exceſſive ſorrow for her friend.

She arrived in London at the period when the Chancellor referred the proof of her ſon's legitimacy to the inferior Courts, and therefore could not immediately indulge herſelf in two things, on which her heart was ſet; the one was, to viſit the burnſide—the other, to trace Roſa, if poſſible, from Edinburgh to wherever ſhe might now be. But though ſhe was obliged to defer ſeeing the ſpot where ſo many ſolitary hours had been ſweetened by the intercourſe of friendſhip, the romantic turn ſhe had acquired there, was not extinct.

She

She remembered the addreſs of the artiſan, who, under promiſe of ſecrecy, made the additions to the wee hooſe, ſo exactly correſpondent in the external appearance to the one inhabited by the progenitors of Donald Ferguſon, and wrote to him, incloſing a drawing of certain mementos ſhe wiſhed erected by the burnſide; with another drawing as acceptable, and better underſtood, from Abraham Newland, to pay for materials and workmanſhip, promiſing a handſome reward, over and above the charge, if, when the ſummer was farther advanced, ſhe found her orders well executed.

The man ſet about the buſineſs with the alacrity ſuch a promiſe might be expected to inſpire; but as he was not now enjoined ſecrecy, Mr. Frazer ſoon heard of it.

"This miſtreſs of your late huſband," ſaid he to his wife, "is a great fool; but ſhe is rich, and is coming into this country."

"I don't wiſh to ſee or hear of her," replied Mrs. Frazer.

"As you pleaſe; but this houſe is *mine*, and here ſhe *muſt* be *invited*."

No man in Scotland could more ſucceſsfully enforce the *muſt* than Mr. Saundy Frazer, W. S.; and accordingly having had the walks, which the inundation had half deſtroyed, cleaned, and put in order, he ſet a boy to watch the burnſide, and give him notice of the arrival of the ſtranger.

"But I don't know this lady," ſaid Mrs. Frazer, peeviſhly, "and it can anſwer no good."

"It is always good," replied her huſband, "to be in the way of the loaves and fiſhes."

But beſides not being known to the lady, Mrs. Frazer had many other reaſons for avoiding what the *muſt* of her ſpouſe enjoined.

Deprived of the power to receive or pay viſits, and no longer the admired leader of faſhions, ſhe was become careleſs both in perſon and dreſs; ſhe who was never uſeful, was now ſlatternly indolent.

She was allowed one female domeſtic drudge; her daughters took care of her chamber, and their own; and all the apartments, not occupied in this miſerable arrangement, were kept ſhut up.

She had no taſte for reading; nobody to write to, and hated needle-work; helpleſs in herſelf, and inſipid to others, there was no break on the ſameneſs of her exiſtence, but what added to its wretchedneſs.

She recalled, with anguiſh, the tender delicate treatment of her former huſband before ſhe offended him, and his ſteady manly conduct afterwards; ſhe could neither ſilence the reproaches of her own heart for her provoking and ungrateful conduct, nor help enumerating the many inſtances of his gentle manly forbearance; but repentance was too late—

"——— Ere folly could ſubſide,
"Or love return, the great Eraſmus died."

The

The moments ſhe paſſed in vain ſorrow, kneeling before her loſt huſband's picture, calling on his name, and embracing her children, though accompanied with tears, were the moſt pleaſing of her comfortleſs life; the reſt were a continued ſcene of wrangling and recriminations, too loud and violent to be checked by good manners, and often terminating with blows on the part of the brutal huſband, and real indiſpoſition on that of the miſerable wife, whoſe children ſhared the affliction of their mother.

Emma was of an age to feel and deplore the diſmal revolution in her father's family; her mind, which, under the example of a companion ſhe loved, had begun to exhibit traits of female perfection, now torn with grief and ſhame for the imprudence of her beloved mother and ſiſter, and deprived of the elegant reſources in which ſhe had hoped to excel, preyed on itſelf; and her delicate form exhibited the uſual melancholy proſpect of a premature decay, which her mother trembled to note.

Jeſſy, the lively little romp, whoſe beautiful face, though expoſed to all weathers, was adorned with a thouſand native graces, was Mrs. Frazer's only comfort;—ſhe combed her hair, ſmoothed her laces, locked the tea-cheſt, and when out of ſight of the neighbours, ſacrificed her *ſhoon* and *ſtockings* to pleaſe Mr. Frazer.

With the moſt grievous ſenſe of this mortifying change of circumſtances, no temptation of loaves or

fiſhes, nor even the definitive *muſt*, could reconcile Mrs. Frazer to the idea of receiving her late huſband's friend at Caſtle Gowrand; nor had ſhe taken one preparatory ſtep for that purpoſe, when Mr. Frazer haſtily informed her, "that as the lady was arrived in a fine carriage, which ſtood at the brig end, ſhe *muſt* go down to the burnſide to meet her."

Perhaps, had not Emma's reſpiration became more quick with joy, had not Jeſſy ſcampered away for her *ſhoon* and *ſtockings*, making the roof ring with, "And are ye ſure the news is true?" Mrs. Frazer would have reſiſted the *muſt*, even at the peril of a few blows; but her children's comforts were ſo unmercifully curtailed, ſhe had not the heart to diſappoint them.

The one laſs and boy, who had the honour to be Mr. Frazer's domeſtics, underſtood ſome ſtrange ſight was at the burnſide; ſo leaving the barley broth on the fire, and the lean cat on the hearth, they followed their maiſter and maiſtreſs to ſpeer.

The meeting of Mrs. Walſingham and Roſa was an intellectual banquet, to which, however great their mental appetite, they did not forget to invite the children of him, whoſe ſpirit they tenderly apoſtrophized.—Mrs. Walſingham, by whom they had been already embraced, called to them. At the ſight of Roſa, Jeſſy threw an old ſtraw-bonnet, which hung on her arm, into the burn, and the delicate ſickly Emma ſunk into her mother's arms.

The

The effect of joyful ſurpriſes are not very terrific;—Mrs. Frazer's eyes were fixed on the ſlow moving burn, while Mrs. Walſingham embraced her children; but ſhe wept with joy at the ſight of Roſa, whoſe endearments ſoon revived her daughter; "Ah my Kattie!" ſighed ſhe, "if my Kattie were but here!"

The Doctor had his ſhare of welcome; Jeſſy quite hung round his neck;—and Mrs. Steward, as a Buhanun, was included in the joyous gratulation;—nor was Peggy, the niece of Donald, who attended her miſtreſs, forgotten.

Mr. Frazer ſcented the loaves and fiſhes; and as he had ſafe, under treble lock, ſome old ſtores of the Major's, he invited the whole party to Caſtle Gowrand, and haſtened forward himſelf to prepare for their reception.

Mrs. Frazer whiſpered Jeſſy, who, ſcampering off in a moment, got before Mr. Frazer; and when the company arrived, the windows were unbarred, the hall-door wide open, and though it was July, large faggots and coals blazing in every chimney in the houſe.

It was not the ill-dreſſed and ill-ſerved ſupper which overſpread the faces of Mrs. Walſingham and Roſa with melancholy;—but the hoſpitable entertainer was no more; the heart, which was warmed with every ſocial virtue, had ceaſed to beat; and recollections would intrude, which could neither be repreſſed

nor concealed. They pleaded fatigue, and were early attended to their chambers by the light-footed Jeſſy, followed by the penſive Emma.

The apartment deſigned for Mrs. Walſingham, was that occupied by the Major previous to his removal to Edinburgh. Roſa could not forget the place where ſhe had paſſed ſo many anxious hours: ſhe ſtarted, and wept.

Mrs. Walſingham, though ignorant of the cauſe of her emotion, was little leſs affected. Emma, whoſe heart adverted to the ſad æra of departed happineſs, looked like an expiring angel; and Jeſſy ſat down, croſſing her ſun-burnt arms on her boſom.

"I thought, Roſa," ſaid Mrs. Walſingham, after a ſilent flood of tears, "to have heard how you have paſſed your time ſince our ſeparation, and to have told you ſome things about myſelf; but we are neither of us fit for converſation, and cannot diſmiſs theſe dear children. Jeſſy ſhall be my bedfellow—let Emma be your's; we ſhall have time for mutual communication when theſe intereſting objects are not preſent."

Up jumped Jeſſy, and flying round Mrs. Walſingham's neck, cried out, "Oh, my own paupau's dear friend! he aw ways ſaid you wud be gude tull hes pure laſſees. Emma ſes ſhe wull nae ſtay wuth mauma and me—ſhe wull gang tull heavene tull dear paupau; but ſhe munna dee—you wull nae lete her dee—lete her gang with you tull the ſooth."

"Can

"Can you part from your Emma, Jeſſy?" aſked the fair invalid.

"Ay, indeed, Emma, I had rather perte wuth you tull the ſooth, tull you gete beter, than lete you gang tull heavene tull dear paupau."

Roſa could not ſpeak; ſhe curtſied to Mrs. Walſingham, and went with Emma to her old chamber, whence the hectic ſymptoms of her bedfellow, and her own painful retroſpects, baniſhed ſleep.

The Doctor, who ſaw with pain the ſtate of Emma's health, took the opportunity of the ladies' retiring, to aſk Frazer's permiſſion for her to accompany him to Edinburgh, which he was ſo far from oppoſing, that he offered to let Jeſſy accompany her ſiſter, if her mother conſented, as it was only on *a viſit*.

Mrs. Frazer, in the meantime, invited Mrs. Steward to ſit half an hour with her; and though that good woman deſpiſed her folly, ſhe could not refuſe to accept it.

A female viſiter was a comfort from which poor Mrs. Frazer was now entirely debarred; and the opportunity accident gave her of venting her grief into a feeling boſom was not loſt: ſhe ſpoke in ſuch ſad terms of her firſt huſband, and blended her regrets for him with ſuch lamentations for the injury his children ſuſtained, that inſtead of making a foe of a friend, as had been her cuſtom, ſhe had the good fortune to change an inveterate foe into a compaſſionating friend.

Mrs. Steward thought no more of former errors; all that occupied her, in reſpect to Mrs. Frazer, was her preſent miſery.

Mrs. Walſingham was agreeably ſurpriſed when ſhe underſtood the Doctor had anticipated her wiſh in regard to Emma; his houſe, both as her guardian, and for the advantage of medical ſkill, was at preſent the moſt eligible place for her.

Jeſſy, though in tears, inſiſted "ſhe was glad Emma was ganging ſooth, ſhe was ſae ſeek."

Roſa could not imagine how it happened that Emma's dialect, though Scotch, was ſo lady-like, while Jeſſy's was as much on a par with the common people.

The cauſe, Mrs. Steward ſaid, was too obvious; her ear was good, and her converſation among thoſe common people. Mrs. Frazer gives herſelf up; Emma is in ill health; and what, with ſuch a fund of ſpirits, can poor Jeſſy do, but talk to thoſe who will talk to her, and run wild among inferior people?

The Doctor's lip quivered. "This evil," ſaid he, "is not paſt remedy; the children of my friend ſhall not be loſt."

"You will, however, remember, Doctor, the comfortleſs ſtate of the poor mother."

"Why elſe have I propoſed taking only Emma to Edinburgh?"

Mrs. Walſingham complimented him on the equal wiſdom and humanity of his conduct: ſhe truſted the

the evil was *not* paſt remedy; and whenever a conſultation became neceſſary, ſhe hoped he would call in Doctor Walſingham and Doctor——"

"Walſingham junior—don't be ſurpriſed, my dear Madam—I thought you had done with Walſingham; —and ſo, when"—Roſa ſtopped; but perceiving neither Mr. nor Mrs. Frazer were preſent, ſhe proceeded —"when I found I diſgraced the name of Buhanun, I reſigned it, and took that you had dropped."

Never was aſtoniſhment more ſtrongly depictured than in the countenance of Mrs. Walſingham.

"Stop!" ſhe cried, "let me be certain I hear right. Say not another word, leſt the hope that raiſes my ſoul to the ſkies be cruſhed. You have aſſumed the name of Walſingham—great and gracious God!—you left Edinburgh laſt ſummer—don't anſwer—I cannot bear to believe you *can* anſwer, to ſtrike me dumb for ever—I could not outlive the diſappointment of my hopes. You travelled through Yorkſhire—you undertook a taſk no human being could accompliſh, that of informing the mind of a rude girl, who already thought of marriage——Oh! dear, dear Roſa! don't interrupt me—you fell into ſtrange company, and—and—"

"Now, at leaſt," cried Roſa, "I may anſwer you:—all this did certainly happen, though I am ſurpriſed to hear it from you; but the ſtrange company I met was my own mother, and her ſecond huſband."

"Your mother! why ſhe told me you was a ſtranger. Ah! if I had then known you had left Scotland, I muſt have been ſure the deſcription I heard could belong only to you. But, my Roſa! my ſweet Roſa! if this woman—this *naughty* woman was your cruel mother, did ſhe not know you?"

Roſa perceived Mrs. Walſingham had heard of her mother's conduct. "I was," ſhe replied, "certain ſhe was my mother, but I could not wiſh to make it known."

"You were right—perfectly ſo. But Roſa—dear, dear girl! I am mortified you do not divine the queſtion I long to aſk:—did you fall into no other ſtrange company, in a ſtrange way?—You bluſh, my amiable, my ever-deſtined child;—ſay, did you not alſo meet an elegant, graceful, accompliſhed, handſome—Oh, Roſa, let me be garrulous in his praiſe, and do not withhold your's for the friend, the eléve of your patron, him, to whom in his laſt hours he bequeathed you, who has ſought you at Penry in vain——"

"Mr. Littleton!"

"Yes, Mr. Littleton—my ſon."

"Oh, my dear friend! what do you ſay? Mr. Littleton your ſon!"

"Not Mr. Littleton, but Horace Montreville, the Earl of Gauntlet, the heir of the moſt reſpectable old officer in the kingdom is Horace Littleton, Colonel Buhaaun's favoured friend, and my ſon."

Roſa

Roſa changed colour—ſhe gaſped for breath—what an explanation was here! Littleton, who had enquired for her at Penry; Montreville, once ſo amiable, now ſo unworthy, the ſame perſon, and ſon to the amiable woman ſo dear to her heart!—graceful! amiable! accompliſhed!—well might maternal fondneſs paint him thus! "And was it you, then, Madam, who entered Pontefract amid the acclamations of the people? did I paſs your carriage, and did not my heart acknowledge you?"

"Your heart was, I hope, at that moment too buſy to think on me."

It was at leaſt buſy enough now; nor was it only her's that was painfully agitated;—the Doctor was all earneſt attention—this *handſome, graceful, accompliſhed* being intereſted *him*.

Roſa felt a faint ſenſation; her ears rung, and her ſight failed; ſhe could juſt aſk for water before ſhe reached the ſaſh of the window.

Magdalena, for we muſt no longer call her Walſingham, ſaw and felt an emotion which ſhe flattered herſelf proceeded from exceſs of joy. Her ſon was, in her fond eſtimation, every thing that was amiable; could he then have failed to make an impreſſion where it was ſo much his wiſh?

Roſa was removed into the air; and when ſhe recovered, wept violently.

"There is no ſuch thing as perfect happineſs, elſe I muſt now feel it," cried Magdalena. "How

have I regretted the fatality that threw my ſon into the ſociety of a woman whom, notwithſtanding appearances were in every reſpect againſt her, he adored! What arguments, what perſuaſions, what adjurations have I not vainly uſed to wean him from a paſſion I thought not only unfortunate, but diſhonourable, becauſe the good man, to whom he owed more than life, left him joint heir with you to his fortune! If he had ſeen you, I knew he muſt have loved you. Never were two minds ſo well paired: the fortune is not a conſideration, but you, Roſa, are *my* choice as well as his; and now I find, that among the miracles of my eventful life it is not the leaſt that Providence has directed my ſon to the woman who, above all others, is moſt acceptable to his mother, and to whom he was bound by honour and gratitude. I dare not indulge my joy, Roſa—I fear your heart is cold; and if it be, my ſon, my only child, will be miſerable."

Magdalena's dignity was abſorbed in melting agony.

"Your eyes, Roſa, your ſpeaking eyes greet not my feelings; but I amaze, yes, I perceive I alſo intereſt your friends; let the carriage be ordered an hour later, and hear the ſufferings of the ſolitaire of the burnſide. It is a juſtification I owe the memory of the father of theſe dear children, and you can never hear it at a more intereſting moment."

Every being preſent were indeed anxiouſly intereſted, and expreſſed a proper ſenſe of the gratification which, with grace, feeling, and energy, ſhe offered them.

Such

Such had been the diſtraction and terror of the miſerable Magdalena, ſhe had not heard, or did not remember, the names of her protectors;—ſhe had indeed ſo much recollection as ſerved to relate the ſtory of her wrongs to them; but the guilt of murder on a mind, in which the ſenſe of religious duties was ſtronger than even maternal affection, after the firſt unfortunate ſhock, left no attention to local circumſtances; and when put on board the yacht by Lord Vallerton, ſhe was even ignorant of her deſtination; for though eſcaping from an ignominious death, to eſcape from herſelf was impoſſible.

The yacht, as reported, was loſt on the Scotch coaſt; and Magdalena, the only perſon who ſurvived, equally fearing and loathing the thought of returning to the world, we have ſeen her mind tranquillized in a ſolitude, where, but for one congenial ſpirit, ſhe would have ſhared the fate of her ſervant Donald. The Major, though he had been forbid to talk to her of the affairs of the great world, except where he was himſelf particularly intereſted, ſometimes carried a newſpaper in his pocket, and read particular ſelected paſſages; one of theſe, which he had left, happened to attract her notice; the front column preſented the advertiſement for evidence relative to her own marriage and her ſon's birth.

What a revolution in her ſyſtem did this important paper produce! All her maternal feelings were renovated; her ſon was probably in exiſtence; and even

even if ignominious death awaited her, how poor a ſacrifice was life in exchange for the bleſſing of ſeeing her ſon, and ſeeing him reſtored to his native right!—But while ſhe reſolved to riſk every thing for her child, ſhe did not forget the falſehood and injuſtice ſhe had herſelf met with, nor the many inſtances of art, by which the victims, of whom ſhe had read, fell into the toils of their enemies. Taking, therefore, Peggy as her only attendant, ſhe directed Donald to order a chaiſe to wait for her at the bridge end, half a mile from his dwelling; and without hinting at the purport of her journey, where ſhe was going, or the time of her abſence, braved the increaſing ſtorm, and left her ſolitude four hours after the Major took a laſt leave of her, and arrived without accident in London.

Her firſt enquiry was after Mr. Adderly; that good man, as full of honour as of years, was yet living, but not in town. She would not dare to write; and though time muſt have altered her perſon, feared to be ſeen; ſhe therefore, after concealing herſelf in an obſcure part of the town, ſet off to Bath, where ſhe was told the good banker was. He had unfortunately left that city on a viſit to a nobleman in Devonſhire, whither ſhe feared to follow him; ſo that ſome months had elapſed before the moment arrived which terminated her misfortunes.

The inſtant ſhe made herſelf known to Mr. Adderly, ſhe heard her huſband had died a natural death, and that her ſon, acknowledged by her father, was

ſuing

ſuing for his natural right with every proſpect of ſucceſs;—he had, he ſaid, been paid every way by the Admiral for the ſervices he had been ſo happy as to render his daughter, but he would now render him one for which no adequate payment could be made; he would have the pleaſure of reſtoring to a reſpectable parent his only child.

Admiral Herbert received her with wonder and tranſport; and ſhe found her ſon even more than a mother's fondeſt wiſh;—when laſt indeed ſhe ſaw him, ſhe preſſed the roſy lip of a cherubim; but he was now pale, languid, and indiſpoſed.

Magdalena's ſoothing tenderneſs won the confidence of her ſon, and it was with infinite pain that ſhe underſtood his indiſpoſition was the conſequence of an internal ſtruggle between a ſenſe of honour and a paſſion he had found irreſiſtible.

Colonel Buhanun had, in his laſt moments, received his word of honour, if not rejected by his protegée, to unite his fate with her's; and though the copy of a will left in England, with a codicil, leaving him joint heir with the young lady to his fortune, had been ſeized in the plunder at Bedanore, and though his own fortune was now ſo large, he had made inquiries after her, with intention to offer himſelf to her acceptance, before he ſaw her on whom his fate now hung.

His ſurpriſe to find his mother knew the Colonel's protegée, did not equal her ſorrow that *he* had not

alſo known her. She however, in compliance with his earneſt entreaty, went herſelf to Pontefract to judge of the merit of his paragon; but ſhe found Mrs. Garnet pining for the loſs of her nameſake, and ignorant of every thing concerning her.

This was a heavy diſappointment to her ſon; but gave her hope that the enchantreſs, who ſhe concluded was an adventureſs, having thus vaniſhed, the charms of Roſa muſt ſuperſede the light impreſſion of a travelling heroine; and ſhe was preparing to accompany him to Edinburgh, when her father's indiſpoſition detained her at the Grange; but ſanguine in her hope, and anxious he ſhould acquit himſelf with honour to his deceaſed friend, ſhe gave him credentials, and he ſet off to Edinburgh, charged with commiſſion to bring Roſa to the Grange; it was from him ſhe heard of the Major's death, the marriage of his widow, Kattie's elopement, and Roſa's leaving the family.

And here ended Magdalena's narrative, which received, as it deſerved, the thanks of the company.—Roſa only was ſilent; ſhe had wept over every misfortune of her friend's life; warmed with her friends; abhorred her enemies; trembled for her danger; exulted in her eſcape, and felt, as if herſelf, cheered by the paternal kindneſs that received and welcomed the wanderer home; but the coldneſs with which ſhe attended to all the intereſts of her ſon could not eſcape the obſervation of Magdalena.

How

How indeed, with Mrs. Woudbe and the ſignature of the "adoring H. Montreville" full in her mind's eye, could ſhe be otherways than cold to praiſes ſo animated, which flowed from maternal enthuſiaſm, on a man whom ſhe conſidered as the moſt ſpecious, as well as deceitful, of his ſex.

Yet, ſhould the pleaſing illuſion be torn from the heart of the fond mother by her? ſhould ſhe be the firſt to announce to the moſt amiable and reſpectable of women, that there were yet ſorrows in ſtore for her; that the honour of her principles were fated to receive a wound it would require all her piety and reſignation to ſuſtain? Ah! no—let the harſh truth come from one who would not, like her, feel the pang both as inflicter and ſufferer!

"Propitious, my deareſt Roſa," ſaid Magdalena, "to my beloved Horace be your ſilence! but I urge no more; you are not the frank, the generous Roſa I once knew; your heart is caſed in cold reſerve; you do not approve, nay, you diſlike the moſt honourable and amiable young man in the world, in whoſe eyes you are a paragon. I ſay nothing of his fortune; I know you too well."

Roſa was ſtill ſilent; it was indeed not poſſible to anſwer without wounding the ſenſibility of a mother, or violating her own veracity.

"Enough," ſaid Magdalena, and viſibly checking herſelf, no longer mentioned her ſon.

Roſa was ready to add her narrative to that of her friend; but it was not required.

"I am rich, Roſa," ſaid Magdalena, after a ſhort ſilence; "my father's fortune is very large; my ſon, who is his heir, and the heir of his own father, has a more ſplendid eſtate than either, independent."

Roſa was ſurpriſed.—"Good God!" ſhe exclaimed, "can then the turpitude—" She ſtopped.

"What turpitude? to what do you allude, Roſa? What! dumb again! Well, I was not vaunting of proſpects; I meant only to let you know, that when you would accept it, it would be my happineſs to accommodate you, and that I could do it without inconvenience."

Roſa never felt the bleſſing of Lady Denningcourt's protection ſo much as at this moment; as without it ſhe might have been reduced to accept pecuniary obligations from the mother of the rich Montreville, in whoſe behalf the wiſhes of that mother, of her friend, the Major's friend, were ſo irkſome, that the ordering the carriages was a relief; and thus the meeting ſo deſired, ſo beyond hope, and which ſhe had long looked to as the end of misfortune, was terminating with coldneſs on one ſide, and anger on the other.

The carriages were now again announced; Mrs. Frazer's reſpect for the character ſhe had traduced, took from her all power to apologize.

The Doctor looked at Magdalena with admiration, and Mrs. Steward thought her a firſt female character:—

ter:—their eyes followed her as she walked slowly to her carriage, leading Emma, and followed by Peggy.

Rosa had almost forgotten Lady Denningcourt's commission; she took out her pocket-book.

"I have done every thing," whispered Magdalena."

"I am only the agent of another heart as kind, as generous as your own."

"*My* heart, Rosa, is really kind to *you*."

"Oh how can I ever doubt——"

"Yet you are reserved; you dare not trust me."

Rosa was silent.

"Obstinate! inexorable!—Come, Emma, we will not divide Rosa from her friends."

When they had lost sight of the bowing Mr. Frazer, his weeping wife, and could no longer hear Jessy's loud fare ye wells, "How came it, my dear," cried Mrs. Steward, "that in the history you were so good as to give us of your adventures, you did not mention this all-accomplished cavalier, who proves to be your friend's son!"

Rosa replied it was not necessary, when she spoke of a gentleman who rescued her from danger, to do it with the enthusiasm of maternal tenderness.

"Happy man!" exclaimed the Doctor.

"It was him then!—Well, I say with the Doctor, happy man! he is, I perceive, your fate."

Rosa firmly answered, "No."

Doctor

Doctor Cameron ſettled himſelf comfortably on the ſeat.

"Is he like his mother?" Mrs. Steward aſked.

The reſemblance would not have ſtruck Roſa, but his eyes were like, and his figure as fine.

"Then he is handſome?"

"Extremely."

"And graceful?"

"Perfectly."

"And accompliſhed?"

"I think ſo."

"And yet my dear—"

"And yet, Mrs. Steward, he is not my fate."

"The road," the Doctor obſerved, "was remarkably pleaſant."

As the day was ſo far advanced, they did not ſtop to dine, but meant to take a ſlight repaſt after croſſing the ferry.

Magdalena was ſolemn and reſerved; Roſa ſilent, but affectionate.

As it would be late when they reached Edinburgh, Magdalena gave her card at "Steele and Montgomerie's:"—Roſa returned her's at Lady Hopely's: and the Doctor agreeing to call for Emma, after ſetting Roſa down, they got into the carriages, and kiſſed hands as the roads ſeparated at the entrance of Edinburgh.

Roſa had been ſilent during moſt part of the way from the ferry, and ſhe burſt into tears when ſhe loſt ſight of Magdalena's carriage.

A few

A few minutes ſet her down at Lady Hopely's door; and before it cloſed, Lady Hopely appeared, with ſo much unpleaſant meaning in her countenance, that Roſa exclaimed, "Dear Madam, I fear to aſk——"

"Ah, my dear!" replied Lady Hopely, leading her in, "here is ſad work; that poor girl is more mad than ever; ſhe will not ſpeak to her mother; and we fear ſhe has even taken a diſlike to you."

Roſa did not ſtay to hear more; ſhe flew to Elinor's room, and, to her grief and aſtoniſhment, found Lady Hopely's fears verified: Elinor turned from her with diſguſt, went into an adjoining room, and abſolutely refuſed to admit her.

"I proteſt," ſaid Lady Hopely, "I do moſt ſincerely wiſh Lady Denningcourt may, if this fit continues, ſend her to ſome private mad-houſe; ſhe will elſe actually be her death."

Roſa now haſtened to Lady Denningcourt, whom ſhe found in diſhabille, with ſwollen eyes and wan countenance, talking with a tall, freſh-coloured woman, who, though her hair was as white as ſnow, had all her ſound white teeth, and ſeemed liſtening, with attentive feeling, to the ſorrowing mother.

"Oh my dear Miſs Walſingham," ſhe cried, "my miſery is complete if Elinor has really taken an averſion to you!"

Roſa wept.

Lady Denningcourt was grieved to tell her, that though it was the Doctor's opinion her abſence had

hurt the poor girl, he was himſelf at a loſs to account for ſo ſudden a change; and beſide, that her madneſs was literally a madneſs with method; ſhe pretended to have been deceived, and therefore ſuffered nobody but Betty to approach her: ſhe was twice ſurpriſed by Mrs. Moggy M'Laurin, the elderly perſon who now curtſied to Roſa, telling her money, of which ſhe had a conſiderable quantity; for it was now firſt recollected, that though, when in her moſt gloomy fits, nothing was ſo acceptable to her as money, ſhe never laid any out.

"Hoping to win on her by what ſhe ſeemed to like ſo well, her mother had given her a card purſe full of guineas; ſhe took the purſe, but her behaviour was the ſame.

The Doctor thought that the conſtant *routine* of company diſturbed her, and adviſed leaving Edinburgh, which Lady Denningcourt reſolved to do in a very ſhort time;—ſhe had, in the meanwhile, ſent for Mrs. Moggy M'Laurin, on whom ſhe could depend, to aſſiſt Betty, as they had left the attendant at Denningcourt.

Roſa hoped this, like her other ſudden fits, would go off; but the Doctor's opinion did not confirm that hope; he was actually ſtaggered;—ſhe ate, drank, and was perfectly collected, but refuſed to ſit in a room, or be ſeen by any body but Betty.

Such extraordinary ſymptoms naturally led to an inquiry of her preceding conduct. She had been cheerful,

cheerful, though anxious, after Roſa's departure; had ſat with Lady Hopely's daughters, and walked to the library at the Croſs with Lady Suſan, before dinner, to look out ſome new books. In the evening, as ſhe objected to the promenade, ſhe took one of the books, Lady Suſan another, and they croſſed the ſtreet to the fields. Preſently Lady Suſan, who was reading ſo attentively, that ſhe had got a few paces on, heard a ſhriek, and turning ſhort, ſaw Elinor had dropped her book, and ſtood ſtill, trembling and pale. She went to her immediately;—two or three common people were about, but none, as ſhe thought, near enough to have frightened her. She, however, could not, or did not, aſſign any cauſe for her emotion; and Lady Suſan, who was now more frightened than herſelf, ſent a woman to her mother for aſſiſtance;—but it was with reluctance, and not till ſhe ſaw the Doctor, of whom ſhe ſtood in ſome fear, ſhe would ſuffer herſelf to be led home.

Lady Hopely was vexed and diſappointed, as the Dowager reſolved on returning home. She would not, ſhe ſaid, burthen her friends with her calamity: if her daughter recovered this fit, ſhe might have another at Athelane, where the Duke was, at this time of the year, in the habit of giving ſplendid entertainments. She grieved that Miſs Walſingham ſhould be diſappointed; but was reſolved to atone for the injury her child ſuſtained from a deprivation of early maternal care, by devoting her life and fortune

to

to her, whatever might be her fate. She hoped the dreary proſpect would not appal Miſs Walſingham; for ſhe confeſſed that *her* ſociety ſeemed like a pearl in the cup of affliction; living, ſhe would ſtudy her happineſs in return for that ſhe would certainly receive from her;—and dead, ſhe would liberally requite her.

The world had as few charms for Roſa as for Lady Denningcourt;—ſhe could not ſee ſo elegant and amiable a woman, almoſt in the prime of life, devote herſelf to ſorrow, without feeling a ſenſation of ſympathy mixed with affectionate reſpect; and declared it would be the pride of her exiſtence to meliorate the affliction it had pleaſed Heaven to inflict; and certain it is, ſhe did, from that hour, meliorate every painful ſenſation in the boſom of Lady Denningcourt.

This night, like the laſt, Elinor refuſed going to bed with any other perſon in the room. "Betty might ſleep in the cloſet;" and as ſhe had reſted well after this indulgence, it was repeated, with the precaution, however, of nailing down the lower ſaſhes of the windows.

Of this ſhe at firſt complained, for want of air; but as the upper ſaſhes let down, ſhe was ſoon eaſy.

The next morning Roſa wiſhed to wait on Magdalena; but Lady Denningcourt was ſo much indiſpoſed, and ſo anxious to have her reports of Elinor, who, however, would hardly ſpeak or look at her, that ſhe found it impoſſible.

In the height of a domeſtic affliction, to which Lady Hopely ſacrificed all her viſiters, and which her daughters were too amiable not to feel, it would alſo be improper for her to receive company at home, and therefore ſhe wrote cards of excuſe to Doctor Cameron, Mrs. Steward, and Emma; but it was not till after blotting near a dozen ſheets of paper, with mingled tears and ink, ſhe could reſolve on one to ſend Magdalena. She ſimply ſtated, that a domeſtic misfortune in the family where ſhe had the honour to reſide, prevented her from ſeeing her, whom ſhe never could ceaſe to love:—begged her favourable thoughts, and lamented a cauſe, which certainly did exiſt, why her heart muſt appear inacceſſible to the friend who was ſo dear to her. To this ſhe received the following anſwer:—

"MY DEAR ROSA,

—"I have not ſlept ſince I parted with you;—but I have been uſed to court ſleep in vain;—there was nothing new, therefore, in that;—I perceive there is a *cauſe*, but whether it is a *reaſon*, time will prove: my carriage is at the door:—my letters, by this morning's poſt, demand my preſence in London, and I only waited to ſee or hear from you:—tell me if Lady Hopely's is your permanent addreſs:—need I ſay you will hear again of

"M. MONTREVILLE."

Roſa immediately returned a ſhort note, and incloſed Lady Denningcourt's addreſs, eaſier in the idea that Magdalena was obliged to leave Scotland, than if ſhe had remained near, without the poſſibility of a free intercourſe, and without a diſpoſition to wiſh it.

The evening of a day that afforded no ray of hope in reſpect to Elinor, was now ſhutting in; and Roſa was ſlowly paſſing her door, toward Lady Denningcourt's, when ſhe popped her head out, juſt to ſay, "Roſa, you have deceived me, but I forgive you," and cloſed it inſtantly. Roſa ſighed, went on, and ſat with the Counteſs till the hour of reſt; when, having looked in on Elinor, ſhe returned to her own chamber.

What ſort of ſleepers Lady Hopely's domeſtics might be, does not appear; but no doubt the kitchen maid, whoſe buſineſs it was to clean the ſteps, was ſurpriſed to find the door on a jar at ſix o'clock next morning. As the police, however, of Edinburgh is ſo excellent, that few night robberies are known there, ſhe thought it might be accident, and ſo let it reſt with herſelf. Before eight, however, the houſe was alarmed by a violent knocking and calling from the cloſet where Betty ſlept.

Lady Denningcourt, whom care rendered wakeful, was the firſt, and Roſa, who was reading and inhaling the pure air of her window, the ſecond, to hear it; they ran into Elinor's chamber, terrified with forebodings of ſome miſchief, and found Betty a faſt

priſoner in the cloſet, the door being locked and bolted outſide.

"What whim is this, my dear child?" ſaid Lady Denningcourt, approaching the bed, where the curtains were drawn round; but no Elinor was there.

Lady Denningcourt fell on the floor ſpeechleſs;—and Roſa, filled with the moſt fearful apprehenſions, ran from room to room, calling on Elinor, dear Elinor. No Elinor anſwered.

The kitchen maid, amid the general alarm, revealed her ſecret about the door:—the apprehenſions for Elinor increaſed:—every ſervant, and as many chairmen as could be found, were diſpatched different ways:—but while Roſa held volatiles to Lady Denningcourt, who fell from one fainting fit into another, and the ladies all ſat in momentary expectation of ſome dreadful cataſtrophe, the houſe-maid brought in an odd glove, a pocket handkerchief, and a ſmall packet of papers, dropped, in going down the back ſtairs, by Elinor, which, on being opened, developed the whole myſtery, and proved, that by this time her madneſs had ended in "*amazement*."

PAPER I.

"MY DEAR ELINOR,

"I am ſo overjoyed, I don't know how to write. I ſaw you at the Croſs to-day, but you did not know

me. If you can open your window when it is dark, and let down a ſtring, any weight tied to it, I will tie a letter, which you may draw up—I won't venture to ſay more."

PAPER II.

"Oh, my dear love! Providence or love ſure gave me the power to put my note on your book, and contrived this method of telling you what I have ſuffered ſince you was taken from me. I was ſent to my father's like a thief, who you, my dear love and friend, know was no father. I hope I never ſhall lift my hand againſt him; but he uſed me like a dog, and kept me tied, on bread and water, till two men came and took me to London in a coach, and then I was happy, becauſe I thought I would beg my way to Cumberland;—but Oh, my dear love! I was in priſon—my own father ſwore a debt againſt me;—to be ſure he paid my board, but what was that, or a golden crown, without you, my dear love? Providence knew I meant no hurt, only to have my dear love;—ſo I was releaſed by a ſerjeant, who was recruiting for the regiment now on duty here, who, before my cruel father knew any thing of the matter, paid the debt, and took me away. I was preparing to deſert, if it coſt my life—for what is life without my dear love?—when I met you. Oh, my dear love! now you are in the country, where you may do what you pleaſe;—

pleaſe;—you remember what you have promiſed to one who has no friend but his dear love—ſuch an opportunity will never come again; and indeed, my dear love, I had rather die at once, than loſe you, my own love. I ſhall ſtay here, under the ſhade of the wall, till you drop an anſwer; and as I have got paper and pen and ink ready, can write any thing by the lamp lights to my dear love."

PAPER III.

"God Almighty bleſs my dear love! I will pray for you night and day. Thirty pounds is the price of the diſcharge—what you dropped is a great deal more than will be wanting. I will go directly about it—God for ever bleſs my dear love!"

PAPER IV.

"All is done—I have bought the clothes, and am now dreſſed in them—it is not the firſt time you have given me a coat to my back. I ſhall have the chaiſe exactly at four—not earlier, elſe we ſhall be at the place too ſoon; where I agreed for a parſon, and then we will go on all the way, my love."

PAPER V.

"All is ready—put on the gown boldly—it is exactly the colour—and you are near the ſize of the maid:—I ſhake from top to toe."

To conceive the aſtoniſhment of the ladies at reading theſe letters is impoſſible.

"I do remember," cried Lady Suſan, "there was a ſoldier paſſed us at the time."

"So then," ſaid Lady Mary, "Miſs Athelane is really——"

A look from her mother ſtopped her.

"My dear Counteſs," cried Lady Hopely, "you don't ſpeak;—what do you ſay to this—what ſhall we do?"

Lady Denningcourt at once revived;—no longer terrified by the momentary expectation of hearing ſome fatal news of Elinor, the elopement was rather welcomed as a relief from fear of ſomething worſe.

"Recall all your people in the firſt inſtance," ſhe replied, "that ſo bad an act may not diſgrace your amiable daughters, and my as amiable Roſa. There is no derangement in this buſineſs—it is her own deliberate act;—I have already taken my reſolution—I can never aſſociate with theſe Croaks, or their ſort—nor would my unhappy child have ever been at eaſe with me or my ſort. I will immediately ſettle a handſome annuity on her; but if her children be my heirs, I will educate them. Roſa, I brought this poor girl into the world in ſorrow; ſhe could not feel affection for a mother, whom ſhe only knew as the being who deprived her of all ſhe loved. I felt this at the moment; but though I ſtrove to attach her to me by every act of indulgence, my love for her was the love

of

of duty; *that* has not, nor ever will be, abated;—but there are certain comforts in looking forward to a dear and amiable companion; and while *you* remain with me, that comfort will be mine;—you are dearer to me than I *can* expreſs—*you* will not leave me?"

"Never, never!" cried Roſa, dropping on her knees.

"No, I will be bound for her," ſaid Lady Hopely, delighted to find an event, which at firſt ſhe feared would have a fatal effect on her friend, received with ſuch temper and reſignation.

"*Never* is too long a period for you, my dear Roſa, to promiſe, or your bondſwoman to engage," cried Lady Mary. "I'll lay my life of ſomething juſt come into my head."

"I know what is come into *my* head," cried Lady Suſan; "we ſhall be the talk of Edinburgh."

"And therefore let us leave it before the races," cried Lady Mary.

Lady Denningcourt was grieved, but ſhe knew her friends too well to ſuppoſe any apology neceſſary from them: ſhe inſtantly ordered her people to get ready—Lady Hopely did the ſame, urging her friend to accompany her to Hopely; but as Lady Denningcourt had determined on not going to Athelane, and as ſhe wiſhed to conſult the Duke before any eſtabliſhment was formed for her daughter, ſhe declined the invitation; and by twelve o'clock left Edinburgh with Roſa in her carriage;—the good Mrs. Moggy M'Laurin had

part of the Doctor's chaise; and as they travelled post, reached Denningcourt by dinner on the third day.

CHAP. X.

A Wedding—Mrs. Feversham in her Element—Mrs. Brown in the Dumps—and an Old Woman peeping through her Spectacles to the denouement of the Beggar's history.

ROSA'S endeavours to prevent Lady Denningcourt's thoughts from dwelling too intensely on the conduct of her daughter during the journey, were even more successful than she could have hoped. She was indeed happily in possession of anecdotes which could not tire her auditor;—every remembrance of Colonel Buhanun; every letter he had wrote; the minutest particular respecting him, was interesting; and though it was her wish to avoid ever adverting to Montreville, yet his early anecdotes were so blended with her own story, that she got entangled in the course of her conversation, and could neither proceed nor retreat without introducing both his story and his mother's.

"My

"My dear child!" cried the Counteſs, in aſtoniſhment, "what is this you are telling me? are you not exerciſing a pretty inventive fancy?"

"Inventive!" repeated Roſa, deeply bluſhing, from an idea that Lady Denningcourt knew the young man.

"It appears ſo extraordinary, ſo incredible to me," replied her Ladyſhip, "that I can hardly believe you have been ſpeaking of certain facts;—the mother of this young man living!—ſaved from ſhipwreck!—ſo long a ſolitary recluſe in Scotland!—My father, Roſa, the late Lord Denningcourt, and myſelf, were the happy protectors of that injured woman."

"You, Madam! good Heavens! but you certainly are, in ſome ſhape or other, connected with all good people, and an active party in all good actions."

"Not quite all, my dear;—but this is a pleaſure I could never have expected, and I owe you a vaſt deal for the information;—I am now indeed intereſted in the event of the law-ſuit."

When the carriage drove up to the entrance of the jointure-houſe, Lady Denningcourt expected the Duke of Athelane would have been, as uſual, ready to welcome her home, as the out-rider ſhe had ſent to announce her return, muſt have arrived; but before ſhe had time to expreſs her ſurpriſe that he did not, the unopened letters addreſſed to him from herſelf, which lay on his table, proved that he had left the jointure-houſe.

Mrs. Moggy M'Laurin, who, the moment ſhe alighted, had enquired hoo her gude Lorde Duke ded? followed with, "Eh my Lady, dinna ai coonſel ye tull gang tull Athelane?"

"Why ſure my uncle is not returned thither?"

"Trothe es he, my Lady."

"And my niece?"

"Endeed es ſhe."

"And Margaret Bruce?"

"Hoot! hoo caun ye doot thaut? ye ken ſhe's awway the ſhadeow of Meſs Angus."

Lady Denningcourt was amazed; according to her calculation, this was the day of the grand ball *al freſco*, which was to conclude the marriage feſtivals. The houſekeeper was rung for; but as ſhe only knew the wedding had not taken place, it is fit the reader ſhould be better informed.—The ſtory was this:—

Mr. Joſiah Turgid ſucceeded his uncle in five thouſand pounds, and a ſet of warm clients; he had therefore a fortune and character ready made to his hand.

Mr. Lemuel Supple, on the contrary, had no more coats than backs, and both very bare;—when at a Weſtminſter election, he being a pot-walloper, though in the one garret he kept for his family uſe, out of a houſe for which he paid, or agreed to pay, twelve pounds per year, no ſuch thing as a pot, and very ſeldom a fire was ſeen:—but a pot-walloper he unqueſtionably was, and a glorious harveſt he made of this

ſame

ſame election; for it was Supple here, Supple there; Supple do this; ſwear that; and all they ſaid, that and more did Mr. Lemuel Supple do;—by theſe means he got in good caſe, and two coats; but what made his fortune, was a long bill he preſented to the committee of the ſitting member; and, as they were weak enough to diſpute it, as the defendant was an unpopular man, and the bill a little obſcure, the jury found a verdict for the plaintiff. This made his fortune, and the world gave his character; after which he was in wonderful requeſt; and had all the Nobles in the land been Lord Gauntlets, he would have had every man of them.

In the caſe of Gauntlet *verſus* Muſhroom, Mr. Supple had many points to conceal; talked with great volubility, but produced none of the documents demanded by Mr. Joſiah Turgid, who had many points to find out, and did not talk at all.

It was an ill-fated morning which brought two unwelcome expreſſes to Delworth; one for the beautiful Counteſs, the other for Sir Solomon Muſhroom, in the perſon of Mr. Joſiah Turgid himſelf, whoſe ſuſpicion of foul play made him ſo watchful and jealous, that he had procured a copy of the deed of renunciation ſigned by the Earl and Counteſs, of thoſe very eſtates, and that very title, for which his client was on the point of paying eighty thouſand pounds; and as the ſtated time for the Earl's deſcent from the Peerage, was within fourteen days after the legitimacy

of his nephew ſhould be proved, and as that was now done, Mr. Turgid had taken the moſt expeditious mode of informing Sir Solomon of the whole buſineſs.

Such of our readers as have viſited that grand and uſeful appendage to the honour and crown of Great-Britain, the wild beaſts in the Tower, and have heard the ſavage monarch of the woods in a rage for his ſupper, may conceive ſomething like the Knight at this diſcovery; but nothing in that, or any other curious collection, can give an idea of the fury of the beautiful Counteſs, when he preſumed to ſpeak, in a loud key, to her on the buſineſs.

Lady Gauntlet had indeed received an expreſs, ill calculated to ſweeten her temper.

Admiral Herbert, notwithſtanding the moſt ſtrenuous endeavours on the part of her friends, to avert the misfortune, had been at Court, where he did not trouble any great man to preſent him: he had made his bows at ſea, and his ſervices were his patrons; he boldly ſhewed himſelf where thoſe ſervices were of the greateſt importance, demanded an audience, and delivered a plain tale, with ſuch feeling and truth, that the penſion on the Iriſh eſtabliſhment, deſigned for the beautiful Counteſs, was reſerved for ſome other, and it is hoped, worthier purpoſe. Notice was ſent to the friends of her divine Ladyſhip, that her preſence would be diſpenſed with; and a note from the Miniſter,

niſter, forwarded with due delicacy, to requeſt the Earl's reſignation of his appointments.

In the midſt of theſe vexations, it was very hard on Lady Gauntlet to have the torments of futurity anticipated, by letting looſe one of her own black implements to torture and upbraid her; it was too much, and the Knight, ignorant of the infinitude of her griefs, thinking it was his reproaches that changed the face of an angel into foaming fury, was appalled.

"To think, Madam," ſaid he, in a ſofter tone, "that you ſhould ſo treacherouſly abandon *me*—me, who have been ſo faithful to your intereſt;—who expoſed my character;—who——"

"Who wrote the villanous ſcroll, of which this is a copy," cried ſhe, ſhewing the rough draught of his offer to Montreville, which he had given to Charlotte, and which ſhe had entruſted to her mother.

Sir Solomon gnaſhed his teeth; drops of perſpiration ſtood on his forehead while ſhe traced his nefarious practices through life, from the beginning of his artful career to that moment, marking the officious intelligence he brought from London reſpecting the wife of the late Earl, and the letters he wrote to Montreville, as the two grand epochs of his life, with a volubility, preciſion, and malice that bore down every thing before it; and when ſhe retired, left poor Sir Solomon, with diſtended eyes, dropped jaw, and ſhaking limbs without power to move. In this con-

dition he was found by Mrs. Feverſham and Miſs Muſhroom.

"Why what, in the name of wonder," cried Mrs. Feverſham, "is the matter with Sir Solomon! ſure, Sir, you are unwell?"

"Law! Mrs. Feverſham, you are always finding out one ſtrange thing or another."

"Charlotte," ſaid Sir Solomon, "you muſt prepare to leave this houſe; you have narrowly eſcaped ruin, and had it not been for my friend, Mr. Joſiah Turgid——"

"Law, uncle! I am ſure he is a very troubleſome, dawdling, old fellow; he can have done no good."

"Charlotte, you muſt not marry this ſon of the Gauntlets."

"Not marry him! not marry Lord Delworth! what, after making ſuch a piece of work! after inviting all the world to the wedding! and making that beggarly Lord at the caſtle as jealous as a Moor! not marry!"

"No, not marry! Get your things ready, or leave the houſe with me without them."

"For my part," joined Mrs. Feverſham, "though the houſe is pretty enough, nay, though it is very pretty, here are ſuch in and out, hocus pocus doings, that I proteſt I ſhan't be ſorry——"

"*You* ſhan't be ſorry, Ma'am. Well, that is too bad; pray who thinks of your ſorrow? My uncle does not conſult you."

"Well,

"Well, don't vex yourſelf about me, you dear diſagreeable thing, for I have a notion you will have affairs enough of more conſequence."

"I ſay we will ſet off immediately."

"Set off, uncle! Law! I wiſh that Mr. Turgid had been hanged. I cannot ſet off, nor I can't be off; Lord Delworth and I have been as good as man and wife ever ſince I have been in the country."

"Huſh—ſh—ſh—ſh!" cried Mrs. Feverſham.

"What does the ſcorpion ſay?" demanded Sir Solomon.

"No, Ma'am, I ſhall not huſh, nor need my uncle be in a paſſion; for Lord Delworth is a man of honour, and we are bound to each other."

"Will he marry you, Madam, without my money?"

"Law, uncle! do you think I can aſk him ſuch an odd queſtion?"

"Ay, Sir Solomon," ſaid Mrs. Feverſham, "that would be an odd queſtion indeed."

"However, Sir (and Miſs Muſhroom at that moment happening to recollect about five hundred caſes in point, which, in all her reading, ſhe had never known to be given up, ſhe aſſumed an air of dignity), my honour and my heart are in my own keeping; I have pledged the one, and yielded the other: ſo, Sir, though I ſhould be extremely ſorry to offend you, I *muſt* ſay I ſhall keep to my engagement."

"You

"You will?"

"Indubitably."

"Why then, by God, Madam, you ſhall indubitably ſtarve."

"Cruel uncle! unhappy Delworth! undone Charlotte!"—and the wretched fair put her handkerchief to her eyes, and haſtening out at the door, was the next moment ſeen paſſing the window, hanging on the arm of her lover.

"Poor girl!" cried Mrs. Feverſham. "You muſt not be ſurpriſed, Sir Solomon; you can't ſuppoſe her heart is to be drawn off and on as you tie or untie your money-bags; ſhe is in love——but, heavens! Sir Solomon, what is the matter?"

Chronic diſeaſes had begun to make great breaches in the equanimity of the Knight's diſpoſition, even before Mrs. Feverſham left Muſhroom-houſe. The alternate ſtruggles of paſſion, grief, rage, and fear, were too much for him to contend with at once; it turned the current of his blood; he became black in the face, then broke out into profuſe perſpiration, and was carried, by direction of Mrs. Feverſham, to bed, with an attack of the gout in his ſtomach, that promiſed fair to take him off.

News of this ſort, whether good or bad, circulates with amazing rapidity. Lady Gauntlet would not condeſcend to enter his chamber; but ſhe heard from two doctors, who were ſummoned, that it was doubtful whether he could live till morning.

Lord

Lord and Lady Gauntlet were juſt now almoſt bewildered with difficulties, inaſmuch as when nobody diſputed his *Lordſhip*, and he poſſeſſed a fine clear eſtate, his creditors were numerous, and ſomewhat impatient. Now he was, or would be in a few days, reduced to plain Mr. Montreville, with no treaſure but a beautiful wife, who had been in her bloom five and twenty years, and who had loſt all her intereſt. The alternative of a priſon or exile, admitted of no doubt as to preference; and it ſtruck her Ladyſhip, that Sir Solomon's money, as to be ſure he muſt die, would make them vaſtly comfortable: ſhe therefore gave her ſon his leſſon; and though the paroxyſms of Sir Solomon's diſorder were frequent and dreadful, Lord Delworth could not bear his dear Charlotte out of his ſight one moment.

Lady Gauntlet had the better opportunity to arrange her grand affairs, as Mrs. Feverſham, finding nobody elſe cared about the ſick man, by whoſe death her leaſt loſs would be her annuity, nailed herſelf to the bedſide, and followed up the doctor's medicines and directions with ſuch zeal, that by day-light the next morning, when he was expected to be a corpſe, the fit had left him, and he was thanking Mrs. Feverſham for the life ſhe had, he ſaid, preſerved.

Although Sir Solomon did not aſk for Charlotte, yet now that he was better, and her annuity ſecured, Mrs. Feverſham thought ſhe would let the dear diſagreeable thing know;—but, lo! her room was empty,

empty, her clothes gone, and her woman, Mrs. Perſian, lamenting that ſhe, who was the beſt dreſſer of hair and layer-on of *rouge* of any Engliſh woman in London, ſhould have demeaned herſelf ſo much as to wait on the niece of a ſimple Knight, who had the aſſurance to elope without letting her into the ſecret.

Mrs. Perſian, the butler ſaid, need not take on ſo; there had been more elopements without the knowledge of as good ſervants as ſhe; for, in the firſt place, Mrs. Woudbe, an artful old devil——"

"*Old!* Mr. Butler;"—Mrs. Feverſham by no means thought Mrs. Woudbe could be an *old* woman, though, in every other reſpect, ſhe was bad enough.

The butler nodded an affirmative. Mrs. Woudbe, then, the young Mrs. Woudbe, if the lady would have it ſo, ſet off at ſeven laſt night, and Madam Roſette, with the young ladies, were to bear her company part of the way; but, poor girls, he dared to ſay, their faces would never be ſeen there again; and how the devil the Counteſs, Lord Delworth, the Major, and Mrs. Modely got off he could not think, as none of the ſervants heard them; but off they all were. "As to me," he added, "I have ſaved a pretty decent fortune, ſo indeed have moſt of the men, and we don't mind a year or two's wages; but it will fall hard on the women."

"What a ſimpleton am I!" cried Mrs. Feverſham, "to liſten to all this proſing, and I dare ſay not a word true—I will go to Lady Gauntlet directly."

So

So ſaid, ſo done; but facts were exactly as Mr. Butler had ſtated them.

This was the eve of the intended wedding-day, when cooks, confectioners, carpenters, fidlers, taylors, lampmen, and all ſorts of trades, were to make the joyful finiſh to their work; and they no ſooner heard that there would be no wedding, nor any money, than they began to be very loud, and very blunt.

What could poor Mrs. Feverſham do in this caſe? Sir Solomon ſtill lay, though out of danger, in a ſtate that rendered it impoſſible to diſcloſe the ſituation of matters to him. The Rev. Mr. Brudenel, indeed, who came down, with a ſpecial licence in his pocket, to marry the young pair, continued in the houſe, for a reaſon that often makes cloſe houſekeepers—he had not money to pay the expence of the journey for his wife and ſelf to London; and all he could ſay to appeaſe the people was ſcoffed at.

In this exigence, Lady Louiſa, who was terrified and indiſpoſed, adviſed ſending to requeſt the protection of Lord Denningcourt and the Duke of Athelane, who both readily obeyed the ſignal of diſtreſs; and by ſome money from the latter, and fair promiſes from the former, prevailed on the people to diſperſe.

The wedding, the carnival, the balls *al freſco*, were of courſe knocked up; and the Duke conveyed his two damſels to Athelane, from whence he propoſed to write to Lady Denningcourt.

The

The aggregate of this hiſtory, told by the houſe-keeper, was truly a ſurpriſe to Lady Denningcourt and Roſa; the latter of whom, on going up to change her dreſs, was followed by Mrs. Brown.

"Oh geminigig, Miſs Roſa!" cried Betty, in a tone between a whine and a ſcold, "you ſee, Miſs Roſy, my ſufferens are never to ind; one trouble after another, Oh dear! Oh dear! what a misfortunate woman I am! To think of Miſs Elinor, to come to go to ſerve me in this manner, as to run away with that ſkapegrace, Jack Croak; for as to my liven again with any of the Croaks, or Madam Bawſky, why 'tis quite out of character, out of the frying-pan into the fire, and I ſhan't do no ſuch thing. Oh dear! Oh dear! to think of my ſufferens would milt a heart of ſtone.—And pray, Miſs Roſa, can you think what is gone with that poor ingnorant man, my huſband? to think as he no ſoonder hopped off with his one leg, than that ſilly Miſs Elinor ſhould ruinate me in this cruel manner."

Roſa's mind had been ſo buſied by the events which rapidly ſucceeded each other at Edinburgh, that after her firſt ſurpriſe, at finding he had not been with the Doctor, ſhe had not thought of poor John.

"Poor Mr. Brown!" ſhe exclaimed;—"Indeed, Betty, I am quite uneaſy about him. I expected to have both ſeen and heard of him at Edinburgh."

"At Edinburgh!—Lord, Miſs Roſy, why what ſhould he do there? that would be only gwain further field

field to tread in the mire; for though Skotlun is not ſuch a devilditch place as I thought, there is a plentiful ſcarcity of poor hobjeks there I am ſure; they talk of the good politiſies of the city, but 'tis all great cry and little wool; for if there is not no thieves, there's baggars enough:—Not that I diſparage baggars, Miſs Roſa, fur from it; I am ſure if I did not clean you myſelf, I ſtood by and ſeed it done; but howſever, wonders grows with acrons, and here be you a gwain to be made a fine lady, and have all poor Miſs Elinor's rooms, even to that hod little one as ſhe liked ſo well, and I ſuppoſe I ſhall loſe my place."

"If you had behaved well to Mr. Brown, perhaps you would not have wanted a place, Betty; for he, I aſſure you, will be taken care of by Colonel Buhanun's children."

"What, I ſuppoſe, Miſs, they'll allow him a crown a week, and ſixpence for backee; but what's that? why not enough hardly to pay for my milk of roſes."

"Then uſe water as I do, Betty."

"Not I, Miſs; for, beſides that your face is as white as the driven ſnow, 'tis not genteel; but howſever, Miſs Roſy, I ſuppoſe you muſt have a maid, as you are gwain to be a fine lady, and as that poor ingnorant man, John Brown, ſaid—let me ſee—ſomething about proſperity breaking the bond of affliction; —and ſo I hope, Miſs Roſy, as you'll ſpeak to my Lady, and let me ſtop;—though God he knows I live

live the life of a dog;—our ſtuart is as grumpiſh as an old hound; and though he is a portly man, and worth a power of money, I think myſelf as good as he—why not? and I am ſure when John Brown had his two legs, and uſt to have his hair plaſtered down his temples, and his cocked hat, and cambric chitterlin, why he was no more to compare with him nor nothen;—but my ſufferens will never ind, that's a ſure mark."

Roſa had changed her dreſs, without the leaſt aſſiſtance from Betty, during her unconnected harangue, which ſhe heard without hearing, her thoughts being full of anxious wonder reſpecting John.—"I am really uneaſy about your huſband, Betty—I think if he is alive——"

"Lord, Miſs Roſy, how ſoon you be dreſſed, and you look as nice as my nail;—alive, Miſs! yes, yes, I dare ſay he is alive and merry; give John Brown a pot of fine amber, a clean chitterlin, ſpatterdaſhes, and that rigmirol old Shukſpur, he never minded nothen about paying the brewer or diſtiller."

"And who did mind it, Betty."

"Why Lord, Miſs, nobody, to be ſure! for I am ſure I had no time.—But Oh, geminigig! Miſs, do look out of this here winder; what thing is that coming waddleing along, with two ſarvants after her? why I wiſh I may die if I don't believe it is my old Miſtreſs Feverſham; why, what can have brought her into theſe parts;—well, to be ſure, ſhe is in her element

element now; geminigig, look at her feathers, and her long train, and ſee, if ſhe has not got a ſmart body carrying her pareſoul—my ſtars! ſhe moves like our gooſe after the goſlings; well, I declare ſhe looks monſtrous credibility; I ſhall go and take notice on her, and aſk her into the ouſekeeper's room, now our ſtuart is ſo grumpiſh;"—and away ran Betty, while Mrs. Feverſham beſtowed on our heroine a ſufficient number of nods and ſhort bobbing curtſies, to intimate ſhe was come to viſit *her*.—So ſhe deſcended time enough to apprize Lady Denningcourt, and witneſs the mortification of poor Betty, whoſe familiar addreſs was anſwered with the moſt forbidding coldneſs, and whoſe invitation to the houſekeeper's room was not anſwered at all.

The lady was ſo over-dreſſed that, between the weight of a gold muſlin, trimmed with Mechlin edging, and gold ſpangles, and an immenſe plume of fine oſtrich feathers, with a large bunch of artificial roſes, and a wreath of the ſame round her trimmed hat, with other appendages totally unſuitable to the undreſs her fine lace morning-cap affected, ſhe really looked ready to ſink with fatigue, when, conducted by a ſervant, ſhe entered where Lady Denningcourt and Roſa were ſitting.

Roſa aroſe to introduce her to the Counteſs, but Mrs. Feverſham choſe to introduce herſelf; ſhe made a ſliding curtſey, hoped her Ladyſhip was well; threw herſelf on a ſofa; took off her glove; ſhewed a white

a white arm decorated with pearl bracelets, and fingers, where, as Betty ſaid, proſperity had broken the bond of affliction, for they were decked with real diamonds inſtead of Doveys. This fair hand ſhe extended to Roſa, with "how do, my dear?—hoom!——I am vaſtly glad to ſee you, as you may ſuppoſe from my taking this long walk, which has almoſt killed me—hoom!—to be ſure I might have rode, but then exerciſe is ſo good for me, I am always better after profuſe perſpiration—hoom!"

Roſa bluſhed for her fine acquaintance.

"Well, I ſuppoſe you have heard how we go on?"

"No;"—Roſa had only heard the marriage was broken off.

"No! what you don't know then they are all off but poor Sol, and me, and the little priggiſh parſon, and his inſipid wife."

"Off!" repeated Lady Denningcourt.

"Exactly ſo," replied Mrs. Feverſham, ſhrugging her ſhoulders;—"and that naſty woman, Mrs. Woudbe, ſhe is finely done up too; you muſt have heard of her?"

Roſa made an effort to ſpeak, but the eagerneſs of the intended queſtion prevented her utterance; and Lady Denningcourt, who, though ignorant of the motives, ſaw her impatience, anſwered for her—that they were juſt returned from Edinburgh, and that having miſſed the Duke of Athelane, who went a different

different road, they were entirely ignorant of the cauſe that had prevented the ſplendid preparations of their neighbour being carried into effect.

The lady begged her La'ſhip's pardon;—in her very delicate ſituation, her mind could not be quite collected, and poor Sir Sol continued ſo ill too:—but the ſhort and the long of the affair was juſt this—hoom!—"The Gauntlets were guilty of bad acts, very bad, in which they implicated poor Sir Sol; he might be guilty, or he might not—that was not the queſtion at preſent;—but they had certainly tried to cheat him out of eighty thouſand pounds;—being detected juſt at the moment, the poor deſpicable Earl rode poſt to Whitehaven, as they had ſince diſcovered, hired a collier to carry them to the Continent, and ſent for his family, who perſuaded the dear diſagreeable Miſs Muſhroom to leave poor Sir Sol in a dying ſtate;—and ſo they are all off."

"Good God!" exclaimed Roſa, with real concern, "and the young ladies! are they too gone in this collier?"

"Oh dear, no! that naſty woman, Mrs. Woudbe, who, though quite done up, is gone to patch up a ſtory to her huſband, took them with her."

"Is ſhe really returned to her huſband?"

"To be ſure, my dear, where would you have her go? after the Iriſh fellow that cheated her of her jewels?"

"Iriſh *fellow!*" Roſa remembered, bad as Montreville was, he was the ſon of Magdalena.

"Ay, fellow!—my dear, how you colour! why you are not going to defend a common ſwindler—a cheat; why, my dear, if he be caught and proſecuted, he muſt be hanged, however it might affect Mrs. Woudbe's fine feelings."

"I hope not,"—and Roſa turned pale, "for his mother's ſake;—what has he done? yet, what I already know is bad enough."

"Do you know his mother, Roſa?" aſked Lady Denningcourt.

Roſa wept.

"A mother!" exclaimed the viſiter; "I never heard of her;—his father was, I find, originally an Iriſh attorney."

"Of whom are you ſpeaking, Madam?"

"Why of Whittal! to be ſure—an Iriſh relation of the mock Counteſs, whoſe father having left him all the ſecrets of the family, and, I am afraid, a few of my poor Sir Sol's, he had the impudence and cleverneſs, for to do him juſtice he muſt have been clever, to paſs himſelf on that naſty woman Mrs. Woudbe, aye, and half a hundred city tradeſmen too (ſo you know that put his cleverneſs paſt all doubt), for a charming young man, for whom I have always had a paſſion—I mean young Littleton, whom Sir Sol ſent to India with your patron, and who is now the declared Earl of Gauntlet."

"And

"And how did you hear all this?" cried Roſa, her boſom panting, her cheeks glowing, and tears trembling in her eyes.

"How did I hear it! why I heard it from every body; and what every body ſays muſt be true—*vox populi* is *vox Dei*;—but indeed I read his whole laſt words and confeſſion before he ſailed for the colonies, in that letter you yourſelf gave into my hands, wherein he adviſed the naſty woman to be true to her dirty little huſband, and gave her directions where to get her diamonds, which, as he could not ſell, he had only pawned."

Roſa was all agitation; ſhe untied her black collar, roſe up, ſat down, ſobbed, half-laughed, looked round for ſome friendly participater in the agonizing triumph of her ſoul, met the ſoft enquiring eye of Lady Denningcourt, flew into her arms, and ſhed a torrent of tears in her boſom.

"My dear ſoul," cried the lady, whoſe name the reader will think rather doubtful, "this is too kind; you are overjoyed at my good fortune, and you have reaſon, though I ſhall chiefly live at Muſhroom-place; yet, your La'ſhip knows, there are certain things one muſt do—ſuch as being preſented at Court, and ſeen there a drawing-room day or two after; and as I ſhall want a ſort of ſmart uſeful companion, why I mean to take you, my dear."

"What, Madam!" anſwered Lady Denningcourt, wiping the tear of ſympathy from her eye,—"*you*

take Miſs Walſingham to be *your* uſeful companion?"

"Oh! I dare ſay your La'ſhip is ſurpriſed; but as to the dear diſagreeable Muſhrooms, I ſuppoſe your La'ſhip knows there will be *two* of them; for Lord Lowder will bring an action, except Sir Sol comes down a ſecond fortune, which I ſhan't adviſe him to do; I am vaſtly fond of them—at a diſtance—your La'ſhip comprehends me?"

"You do my penetration too much honour, Madam; but Miſs Walſingham is totally unfit for the ſituation you propoſe."

"Your La'ſhip really thinks ſo;—well, I am ſure I am vaſtly obliged to you;—but my good wiſhes are the ſame. I believe ſhe has rather a more haughty mind than exactly ſuits her origin; but I am very fond of her, for all that."

"*At a diſtance*, Madam, perhaps."

"Oh! no, my Lady, upon honour I was quite ſerious."

"My dear Mrs. Feverſham!" cried Roſa, with a ſmile that diſplayed a thouſand graces, "I know you are, and my obligation to you."

"Lady Muſhroom, at your orders— Bleſs me," looking at a watch ſet round with brilliants, "I wonder my carriage is not come; poor Sir Sol will really fret himſelf ill; he does not know where I am gone; but he will get uſed to that.—You look ſurpriſed, and as we are in a moſt beautiful, romantic ſituation, I declare

declare I will have Muſhroom-place taken entirely down, and rebuild it like this;—but more like the heroine of a romance than a novel, I will tell you my ſtory in ſix words."

Lady Muſhroom's carriage was announced.

"I am ready.—Well then, my dear, you know I told you poor Sir Sol was extremely ill; and really, as I ſhould have loſt my pitiful annuity, and the poor man was left by every body, I took all poſſible care of him, not at all conſcious that every pill, and every draught I gave him, was impregnated with love; for you know that was the laſt thing one could have expected from a man with the gout in his ſtomach;—he made the propoſal, and I (here Lady Muſhroom thought proper to put her ſpangled fan before her face) acceded.—The little priggiſh parſon, and his poor pining quality ſpouſe, were aſhamed to be ſeen; he had a ſpecial licence in his pocket, not filled up with the names of the bride and bridegroom; I got old Turgid to mention the matter; the parſon demurred, but Turgid had been ſo abuſed by the Gauntlets and the dear diſagreeable Muſhroom, and the parſon was in ſuch diſtreſs for money, that we carried our point. Poor Sir Sol was ſupported on pillows, and I dare ſay was ready to expire with rapture, though he talked of revenge; however, whatever he felt, as he ſaid he ſhould die in peace, and as I knew I muſt live in ſplendour, why I make myſelf happy.—

Adieu, Miſs; your La'ſhip's moſt obedient.—My carriage—!"

"What a woman!" exclaimed Lady Denningcourt.

"Oh my deareſt Madam," cried Roſa, burſting into freſh tears, while joy beamed from every feature, "What a man!"

"Who, my love?"

"This friend of my firſt benefactor; this ſon of the long-ſuffering Magdalena; this—Oh forgive and pity me, this idol of the poor Beggar's heart!"

The explanations, which followed the tender confeſſions, were ſuch as increaſed the intereſt of the Counteſs in her protegée; but no ſtep could be delicately taken, to prove her recantation of error either to the young man or his mother.

Roſa ſhewed her patroneſs the note Magdalena had ſent her; and it was known that Delworth was now the property of the right owner. The ſervants were not, indeed, yet diſplaced; but as the Grange ſteward was already arrived, and taking account of every thing, and as Roſa had given her addreſs to Magdalena, Lady Denningcourt thought the matter muſt reſt, as far as related to her, in its preſent ſtate; "It will not, however, be amiſs," ſhe continued, "to keep up an intercourſe with Mrs. Feverſham; and Oh," ſhe cried, "how incredible ſhould I have thought it, that I ever could love a Counteſs of Denningcourt, as I do, and ſhall love you."

The

The afternoon (Oh what an afternoon was this to Roſa!) was paſſed by the Counteſs in her boudoir, writing letters to the Duke, and to her daughter, and Doctor Croak, incloſed in one to her agent in London, and one alſo, which ſhe did not mention to Roſa, reminding Magdalena of their meeting at Florence, and inviting her and her family to Denningcourt; and afterwards they rambled to the village, and viſited thoſe benevolent foundations, which had filled Roſa's heart with veneration for the Counteſs's character before ſhe knew her perſon.

"Oh!" cried Roſa, ſighing, as ſhe watched the receding rays of the ſetting ſun empurpling the turrets of Denningcourt Caſtle, "Oh that the wretched inmate of that venerable building———"

"Do you mean Lord Denningcourt's miſtreſs? ſhe is gone, ſhe has left him; and though he did not appear to care about her when ſhe was with him, my houſekeeper tells me he ſet off to Scotland after her, like a diſtracted man, this morning; 'tis a ſtrange ſtory ſhe tells me; he pretends to be jealous of Duke Athelane; and indeed ſhe ſays M'Lane certainly did often go to the caſtle; but I know my uncle."

"Dear Lady Denningcourt, and ſo do I; what a ſucceſſion of joyful ſurpriſes ſucceed my tranſient ſorrows; ſo tranſient, I have almoſt forgot them! The Duke has, I doubt not, taken her away. Oh ſhe was ſuch a beautiful girl! and her father ſo loved her;

and, though he did not ſhew it ſo much, admired her too."

Lady Denningcourt wiſhed ſhe had known this before her letter to the Duke was ſent off, but would write the next poſt. "Something," ſaid ſhe, "it ſtrikes me, I may do for a family to whoſe moſt valuable branch I have been ſo diſaſtrous."

"Oh geminigig," cried Betty, when Roſa was going to bed, "Miſs Roſy, was you ever ſo dumbfoundered in your life, as at ſight of Madam Feverſham made Lady Muſhroom? Our ſtuart has been up to Delworth this evening, giſt out of a bit of kuroſity, and there they ſay ſhe do top it moſt finely; and Sir Solomon, an ould rogue, I am ſure, if it had not have been for he, I mought have had a ouſe of my own to this day; but God a-mighty pays debts athout money; howſever, he can't ſtand hand nor foot; and after all, the doctor thinks as it's a moat pint whether he lives or dies. Lord a maſſey only think, if he ſhould die outright, and ſhe have all his money; geminigig, how my head do turn round with other people's luck; God he knows I was born under a threepenny planet, never to be wuth a groat; for what do you think my Lady ſaid?—why ſhe ſaid, ſes ſhe, if Elinor chuſes to have you, Brown, I expect you will be appy to attend her; and I am ſure I ſhan't be appy at no ſuch thing; if not, if Miſs Walſingham chuſes to keep you, you will, I ope, be ſenſible of the honour;—Lord, Miſs Roſy, I could ardly help

help lafen in her face; howſever, if I do go among them Croaks again, they'll find me a crabbed ſtick, I can tell them that."

"Very well," replied Roſa, ſmiling.

"Why, Lord, Miſs! what is come to you? why, the turn of a ſtraw t'other day ſet you a crying, and now a ſtraw without turning ſets you a-lafen; but they may laf that wins—my ſufferens are without ind, I know that. But pray, Miſs, how do you like that tall ould Scotſwoman, as my Lady is ſo fond on?"

"Mrs. Moggy M'Laurin?—Oh ſhe is a charming, good creature!"

"Well, Miſs, I don't think much amiſs on her—only ſhe is a little kurous; ſhe aſked me ſo many queſtions about you, that I was ſo hampered, as I always ham, when I got any thing to keep ſecret, that I told her all your whole ſtory in the park juſt now, and, Lord, ſhe cried as if one had ſtuck her with a knife; and when I told her what a piece of work I had to get you clean, and how poor John Brown—well, he was a good-natured ſoul, give the devil his due—would not let us rub that naſty mark off your ſide with a round towel, well, to be ſure, I thoſt as ſhe would a ſounded at that, and, poor ſoul, ſhe ſes ſhe'd give the world to ſee it; but, as I ſay, that's all nonſenſe.—Good night, Miſs Roſy."

The next morning Mrs. Moggy M'Laurin entered the room with Mrs. Brown, before Roſa was up.

"Trothe, Meſs," ſaid the good woman, "ai caunnae tele hoo daft ai am; but gin ye wull juſt lete me luke et the merke the gude weef ſpeer'd juſt by your herte, ye ſal note ken hoo mickle ye ſal ſarve me? I hanna claiſed mine een aw neight aboot it."

Roſa ſmiled and bluſhed; ſhe was a ſtranger to the naked freedoms ſome modeſt ladies do not withhold from the world, much leſs each other. The Tyrian marble was not more ſmooth than her poliſhed neck, nor that of the Grecian Venus more finely formed.—It was impoſſible, in a liberal age, where ſamples are allowed to the ſight of the amorous chapmen of thoſe charms which marriage only can authorize them to touch, that ſhe could be unconſcious of her own ſuperior beauty; but ſo truly did modeſty blend her ſoft influence with that conſciouſneſs, that while a white dreſs was thrown over her neck, it was with reluctance ſhe permitted Mrs. Moggy M'Laurin to examine, with her ſpectacles, the blue mark which had heretofore ſo puzzled Colonel Buhanun's kitchen committee.

Mrs. Moggy M'Laurin's examination laſted a moſt unreaſonable length of time; her ſpectacles ſeveral times became miſty; they were taken off, wiped, and often replaced, before Roſa felt a ſucceſſion of warm drops fall from the inſpector's eyes on the little mark under her heart.

"What is the matter, my good Mrs. M'Laurin? do I bear the ſame mark with any one dear to you?

have you ever loſt a child or grandchild with ſuch a mark?"

"The Lorde's wull be done!" cried Mrs. Moggy, caſting up her eyes and hands.

"Amen!" cried Roſa.

"Amen! pray God!" echoed Betty—"for what cant't be cured muſt be endured."

Mrs. Moggy M'Laurin ſat on an arm-chair by the bedſide, with her eyes fixed on Roſa through her ſpectacles, ſave only when they were taken off to be wiped, obſerving a profound ſilence till ſhe went to her dreſſing-room, whither ſhe alſo followed, and where ſhe remained without ſpeaking, till Roſa was ready to leave it, when ſhe complained of a moſt violent head-ache, and went to bed.

Lady Denningcourt wrote this day again to the Duke of Athelane, and alſo returned Lady Muſhroom's viſit without Roſa.

Lady Muſhroom's brain was a perfect eddy before this honour, of which ſhe did not fail to make the moſt; and though the Counteſs behaved with remarkable affability to Lady Louiſa Brudenel, Lady Muſhroom was ſo very good as to expatiate, in a whiſper, on the advantage of character. "You ſee," ſhe added, "how it is—poor Sir Solomon and myſelf are only a ſort of interlopers, yet *I* am viſited."

Lady Louiſa, dejected and ſpirit-broken, urged Mr. Brudenel to return to London when Sir Solomon gave him a fifty pound note, and his lady a fine dia-

ond ring, as a douceur for performing the ceremony; but poor Mr. Brudenel, who, having reckoned on ſharing ſome part of the eighty thouſand pounds, had promiſed to diſcharge certain pecuniary obligations, was really afraid to return. Lady Denningcourt ſaw the ſpiritleſs deſpondence of the wife, and the ſettled gloom of the huſband. Lady Muſhroom had given a key to both: and the Counteſs could not help feeling the miſerable indelicacy of the unhappy pair waiting to be turned out of what Lady Louiſa was born to conſider as her father's manſion; ſhe with difficulty repreſſed the tear of ſenſibility, while Lady Muſhroom was bleſſing herſelf, that as poor Sir Solomon could not be moved, but at coſt of his life, the young Lord muſt know ſhe could have no hand in poor Sir Solomon's wickedneſs.

Mr. Brudenel and Lady Louiſa at length, lacerated with internal anguiſh, left the apartment.

"Poor things!" exclaimed Lady Muſhroom, "I don't know what will become of them."

Lady Denningcourt, who but to hear if any thing intereſting to Roſa tranſpired, would have thought as little of viſiting her new Ladyſhip as the former miſtreſs of the manſion, took her leave; and Lady Muſhroom was in too great a hurry to announce the honour done her by her viſiter to poor Sir Solomon, to notice that the Counteſs's carriage proceeded empty, and that ſhe walked from the houſe with the Brudenels. Mr. Brudenel's was not only a gentleman's, but a

ſacred profeſſion; and Lady Denningcourt conſidered the cauſe of religion as ſuffering when its miniſters were reduced to be objects of deriſion or contempt.—Mr. Brudenel was now no longer ſo; he handed her to her carriage, while Lady Louiſa ſupported herſelf, overcome with emotion, againſt a tree. The Counteſs drove off, and the altered pair returned to the houſe, put their things together with alacrity, and began their journey to London without fear of moleſtation when they arrived there.

CHAP. XI.

A ſhort Chapter, containing the Rejection of a Lover, the complaints of a Wife, and the Tables turned on Mrs. Brown.

THE firſt perſon Lady Denningcourt ſaw, after her return from Delworth, was Mrs. Moggy M'Laurin with a handkerchief bound round her head; her ruddy cheeks tinged with a light purple, and her eyes ſore with weeping.

"My dear M'Laurin, are you ill?" cried the Counteſs; "what ſhall I do for you?"

"Trothe

"Trothe ai'll tele ye, my Lady, ye mun ſend me to the ſooth, ai'll be ſhoore to coom bauck en a wee bet."

"To the ſouth! why what would you do there?"

"'Tes nae metter, ai mun gang."

"But conſider, dear Moggy, though you are hearty among your friends, you are too old to take a long journey alone."

"Ai caunna be too eild tull ſarve Gode an my frinds."

"But what buſineſs?"

"'Tes a coonſel I caunna deeſcloſe."

"This is the ſtrangeſt whim; if you are weary of ſtaying with me, go home."

"Ah, my Lady, you dinna ken; I caunna reſte neet nor day, ſae mun gang ſooth an ai weer tull dee."

"Think of it to-morrow."

To-morrow came; Mrs. Moggy bound a ſecond handkerchief round her head; a darker purple tinged her cheek; her eyes were more ſwollen, and her whim, like moſt old women's whims, ſtrengthened by oppoſition; to the ſouth ſhe would go; and at length, accompanied by the houſe ſteward, to the ſouth ſhe went, promiſing "to be ſhoore tull coom bauck en a wee bet."

The attachment of Lady Denningcourt to her young, and now only companion, acquired every hour a more endearing character. Beſides the reſemblance

ſo

ſo dear to memory, there was a modeſt rectitude of mind, a ſuavity of manners, a grace of ſpeech, and an unremitting deſire to pleaſe in Roſa, that could not fail of improving the partiality of ſuch a mind as that of her preſent protectreſs.

Roſa, on her part, found the maternal ſolicitude ſhe had experienced from Mrs. Harley, and which ſhe valued as the deareſt of bleſſings, even increaſed in Lady Denningcourt; and it excited that only return of affectionate gratitude, which *owing* owes *not*; and thus ſo happily diſpoſed towards each other, in the full enjoyment of ſplendid affluence, and poſſeſſing that ſenſe of the bleſſings of Providence, "which leaving nothing to aſk, could only be inceſſantly thanked," Lady Denningcourt and her protegée muſt have been completely happy, but———

"Oh that eternal *but!* that cruel, never-conquered laſt head of the hydra of human infirmity!—*but* the good, the amiable Lady Denningcourt had found in the dear and unhoped maternal tie, which ſhe conſidered as a bleſſing of the firſt magnitude, a ſource of uneaſineſs which called for all her fortitude to combat, without a hope of ſubduing; and there were many, very many moments, when Roſa's heart detached itſelf from every preſent bleſſing, and when fancy would wander to the reſidence of the beloved Magdalena, and figure the mortification of her ſon at the determined coldneſs which had ſo viſibly diſtreſſed his mother; and when bewildered in uncertainty, now

elated

elated with baſhful hope, now depreſſed by fear, ſhe gave herſelf up to that ſoft melancholy, "which is ever the forerunner of pleaſure."

An enormous and intereſting packet, which arrived from Duke Athelane, occupied them a whole day in reading and anſwering.

The Duke regretted that conduct in Elinor, which a cloſe obſervation on her lucid intervals had, in ſome degree, prepared him to expect; and approved of the plan of conduct the Counteſs had adopted towards her:

"Not all the blood of all the Howards

could, he was now convinced, ennoble the ſoul; and the comparative merits of the two young friends at the jointure-houſe had been to him a leſſon of humility in reſpect to blood, he believed he ſhould be the better for as long as he had power to make any diſtinctions at all;—he pleaded guilty in reſpect to the depriving Lord Denningcourt of his miſtreſs—that Lord who, like Pococurante, was one of thoſe prodigious genuiſes whom nothing in his poſſeſſion could pleaſe, was now in the neighbourhood of Athelane, with Lord Aaron Horſemagog, his firſt introducer to the Buhanuns, threatening deſtruction to himſelf and all mankind if he could not recover a jewel, whoſe luſtre poſſeſſion obſcured:—"but," the Duke continued, "if ever he receives her again, it muſt be as a bride from my hands." The remaining part of the packet more particularly concerned our heroine.

Mr.

Mr. Angus, immediately on his coming from Caithneſs to Athelane, to pay his reſpects to the Duke, declared his paſſion for Roſa, and ſolicited permiſſion to make her honourable propoſals.

The Duke was aſtoniſhed; he had never underſtood Roſa was known to, much leſs beloved by, his nephew:—he expreſſed himſelf with ſome aſperity on the occaſion, both in regard to Mr. Angus, and the fair object of his admiration; to exonerate her a letter from Doctor Cameron was produced, acquainting Mr. Angus, not only with the ſituation, but ſentiments, of Roſa: and as the Duke readily adopted his nephew's ſanguine opinion, that her rejection of his paſſion proceeded from a delicate reſpect to his family, it reſtored her to his eſteem, but left him exceedingly embarraſſed in regard to his nephew.

Indeed, had Roſa been in any other protection than his own family, it is probable the young gentleman would have made his firſt propoſals to herſelf; but the propriety and delicacy of her ſentiments, which the Doctor inſiſted were even improved, though, when ſhe had firſt left Edinburgh, he thought that impoſſible, aſcertained that the moſt honourable mode would alſo be the moſt politic;—accordingly he openly avowed his attachment; and his paſſion had the more formidable an appearance, as it had been nouriſhed with undeviating conſtancy when hope was almoſt extinct.

Miſs Angus, after the firſt ſurpriſe, frankly approved his choice; while Miſs Bruce, who had already

ready taken care to inform him that his uncle had deſtined him for a mad wife, heard, with diſmay and aſtoniſhment, not only that the enchanting Walſingham was adored by him ſhe choſe to adore herſelf, but that ſhe was, in fact, the identical little Beggar, of whom every body had heard ſo much, and knew ſo little.

The poor diſappointed lady took fits on the occaſion, of two ſorts; firſt, ſhe ſhrieked, kicked, ſcratched, and bit herſelf, and every body elſe; then ſhe talked her hearers into the vapours, about the terrible diſgrace an alliance ſo degrading muſt entail on the houſe of Athelane; whiſpering even to the ſervants that the Honourable Mr. Angus was going to make a beggarly and ſpurious deſcendant of the Buhanuns, future Ducheſs of Athelane.

This ſecret was of a complexion to irritate every collateral branch of the family, and remonſtrances were made in form to the Duke, by the friends of all the young unmarried ladies of the whole clan, againſt ſo unheard-of a diſgrace.

Had the whole female creation been ſubmitted to his Grace, to ſelect a bride for his heir, the ſolemn approbation of his own heart would have reſted on Roſa; but the *who*, and *what*, of ſo much and grand importance among the old Scotch nobility, were conſiderations of ſuch terrific magnitude, as at leaſt made him heſitate; and after for ever diſcarding the incendiary, Miſs Bruce, he extorted a promiſe from his nephew

to

to allow him a month for conſideration, before he took any ſtep in the buſineſs, and then wrote a ſtatement of particulars to Lady Denningcourt, requeſting her ſerious opinion of a buſineſs of ſo much conſequence to the family.

"Ah!" ſaid Lady Denningcourt, after reading the Duke's long letter to Roſa, "this is a ſort of toil my uncle ſpreads for *me*; he wiſhes, I ſee, to juſtify his exceſſive partiality for you by my example, and I ſhould certainly fall into it; but you, Roſa, are not, I fear, diſpoſed to prove the triumph of humble virtue and extraordinary beauty over noble blood and clanniſh tenacity. I muſt, however, anſwer the letter;—what ſhall I ſay for you?"

"Say, my dear Counteſs," replied Roſa, "all that reſpectful gratitude———"

"But what in reſpect to the fineſt young man in Scotland? what of your heart?"

"Oh Madam!" and Roſa deeply bluſhed.

"Ah's and Oh's are awkward interjections in certain caſes, my ſweet Roſa; again I aſk, what ſays your heart to Mr. Angus, with a fine fortune in poſſeſſion, and the ducal honours and eſtate in reverſion?"

"I am worthy of neither."

"You are not allowed to judge of that;—it is your heart I would ſpeak to."

"Well then, my heart—is a loſt one."

"And you do not wiſh to recal it?"

"Oh

"Oh no!"

"Oh! again. Well, retire to your boudoir, as I will to mine; write the Duke on common ſubjects, ſuch as Magdalena's hiſtory, which you tell ſo prettily—that will make him ſad; then give him our bride, Lady Muſhroom's—that, if any thing can, will make him ſmile. Roſa, you do not perceive, what is very clear to me, that, after all this ſolemn ſtatement, the Duke's heart is ſet on ſeeing you the wife of Angus: that heart of his, Roſa, is a noble one, and is, in all its regards to God and man, exactly what a chieftain of the firſt Caledonian family ſhould be;—but go to your boudoir—I am to be explicit?"

"Perfectly."

"And your heart is certainly a loſt one?"

Roſa bluſhed an affirmative.

"And you have no ambition?—you will only be a Counteſs?—Go, go, Lady Gauntlet;—the Lady Gauntlet that *was*, could have taught you better."

The anſwers diſpatched to Athelane, the fair Dowager at the jointure-houſe, and her protegée, might have been in the ſtate of angels; *but*—again, and for ever, there muſt be a but againſt perfect happineſs:—

"Man never is, but always to be bleſt."

No letter had yet arrived from Magdalena nor from Elinor; and conſtant expectation of the paſt, with the ſucceſſive diſappointments, would have broke in

in a little on the pleaſure, not leſs grateful to Roſa than her protectreſs, of repeating over and over every anecdote ſhe could remember, or Betty remind her, of Colonel Buhanun, which, though a tale told ſo many times, was never tedious. As to the reading the letters ſhe had received from him, and bathing every character with tears, that was a luxury Lady Denningcourt was even avaricious of, and ſhe had taken them into her own poſſeſſion for that purpoſe.

Lady Muſhroom was in the habit of paying them flying viſits when any thing new occurred at Delworth. Miſs Muſhroom had wrote a penitential letter to poor Sir Sol, which he refuſed to open; the houſekeeper and butler at Delworth had received notice to quit; but as all the reſt of the ſervants yet remained, and no particular notice had been taken about poor Sir Sol, who was again in a dangerous ſtate, ſhe had no thought of removing; till one morning ſhe was announced, juſt as Roſa was ſitting down to her harp, and before Lady Denningcourt had left her chamber.

"My dear creature," ſhe cried, "do you know that I am the moſt miſerable creature in the world? not excepting poor Sir Sol. I ſhould have ſent my P. P. C. but have fifty thouſand things to ſay.—Half a dozen people came to Delworth laſt night, a little ugly dark woman among them, who, in a language which I had difficulty to comprehend, abuſed poor Sir Sol, and actually threatened to have him thrown

thrown upon a dunghill. Now, though I dare ſay he deſerves it, as between ourſelves, he is a ſad wicked old man, one muſt not, for one's own credit, ſuffer him to be ill uſed; ſo I ſent his valet and Mrs. Perſian, whom, as ſhe dreſſes hair, and puts on *rouge* ſo vaſtly well, I have made my own woman, about to find accommodation, at any price, ſuitable to our rank; but, if you will believe me, my dear, the brutes at all the inns within ten miles round refuſed to take us in;—ſo as the man, who came with the little ugly foreigner, ſaid, he was ſure his Lady would not be the death of her greateſt enemy, and as I have always had a paſſion for that fine intereſting creature, the rightful Lord Gauntlet, who knows I was no party in poor Sir Sol's iniquity, and as it is really a pleaſant thing to ſee right take place, I ſhould have made myſelf eaſy;—but poor Sir Sol is really as obſtinate as wicked, and had rather *almoſt* die—not quite—he would be ſorry to do that, I believe—than face either mother or ſon of theſe Gauntlets;—ſo, my dear, I am vaſtly ſorry to leave you; indeed I am alſo half ſorry I married this old wicked Sir Sol;—in London, nobody minds any thing of the kind; if people have money, and live in ſtile, they may be as wicked as they pleaſe, without inconvenience; but here in the country, when one hears all ſorts of people ready to worſhip Lady Denningcourt in the ſame breath that they curſe Lady Gauntlet and my poor wicked Sir Sol, one really gets out of conceit with bad people; and then,

if

if I were not Lady Muſhroom, I dare ſay your Counteſs would have invited me to ſtay the ſummer with you, inſtead of begging to be taken in at paltry inns."

Lady Muſhroom actually wept at the concluſion of this ſpeech; and Roſa, who was by this time pretty well acquainted with her good and bad qualities, tried to conſole her by reverting to the many advantages of her ſituation.

"All ſtuff! my dear," interrupted Lady Muſhroom;—"To be ſure, I have been cutting down and letting out heaps of fine dreſſes, made for that tall May-pole, the dear diſagreeable Muſhroom; but as I was unfolding the prettieſt ſilver muſlin I ever beheld—here it is—(throwing a parcel on the ſofa)—I found a paper, on which was wrote, 'A gala dreſs for my ſweet child, my Roſa;' ſo that evidently belongs to you;—and now I ſhall be afraid to put on an article, leſt it ſhould be the right of ſome wronged widow or orphan, and ſo include me in the curſes on the injuſtice of poor Sir Sol. Well, my dear, God bleſs you! I ſhould have been vaſtly glad to have you with me, if you had been fit for my place, which the Counteſs aſſured me you was not. I am ſure I wiſh I was in your's with all my heart and ſoul;—but adieu! I muſt go and take care of poor wicked Sir Sol.—We cannot be taken in nearer than ſixteen miles."

Roſa

Roſa attended her to her carriage, and aſſured her of the Counteſs's good wiſhes, as well as her own; lamented ſhe could not ſolicit an invitation for her to the jointure-houſe, as wife to ſo bad a man, but if ever———"

"Oh, my dear!" cried Lady Muſhroom, burſting into tears, "you can't think what a good man my Mr. Feverſham was—every body was civil to me on his account. Oh Lord! I wiſh I was a widow again."

The carriage drove off with this moſt common wiſh; and Roſa, finding the Counteſs was in her boudoir, went thither to acquaint her with the motive of Mrs. Feverſham's early viſit.

She found her with a letter in her hand, on which her tears dropped in rapid ſucceſſion; and this ceaſed to ſurpriſe Roſa, when ſhe ſaw it came from Elinor. The Counteſs gave it her to read, and ſhed a freſh flood of tears.

The letter was a mixture of regret and ſelf-acquittal for the ſtep ſhe had taken, which ſhe attributed to the being deceived in reſpect to young Croak's ſituation after ſhe was ſeparated from him by the Duke; for, inſtead of being well and happy, as even Roſa aſſured her, he was in priſon, breaking his heart.

She was very ſorry to have vexed Lady Denningcourt, but it was the only way to make her eaſy in the end, for ſhe never could have been at home among people of quality; and really believed, if Jack had not

not taken her away, ſhe ſhould have been as bad as ever among the Lords and Ladies at Lady Hopely's, whoſe names ſhe never could remember. As to the Duke, ſhe never looked at him without trembling; and as to Doctor Croak, ſhe ſhould never be able to abide him for his cruelty to Jack; though, as he was growing old and poor, they intended to allow him a maintenance.

They were now with their uncle, the farmer doctor; where, as it was harveſt time, they were all very buſy; and as he had been ſo good to her dear Jack, ſhe hoped her dear Ladyſhip, whom ſhe could not dare to call mother, would not be angry, if, out of the much too liberal allowance ſhe propoſed, they bought the farm he rented, and gave it to him; and indeed, as Jack hated idleneſs, ſhe believed he would go partners with his uncle.

She ſent her love to dear Roſa, whom ſhe ſhould always love better than any body in the world, except Jack, and whom, if ſhe had not been deceived by her, Elinor would never have left, but who was, notwithſtanding, much fitter to live with a Counteſs than herſelf.

As to Betty Brown, ſhe had learned to be ſo fine a lady, ſhe would be quite troubleſome in a farm-houſe, where there was no milk of roſes; ſo as Jack had got a handy girl to wait on her, ſhe hoped Roſa would keep poor Betty. She concluded with thanks and obedience, &c.

"You ſee," ſaid the amiable Counteſs, "not only my peace, but my child's happineſs, depends on my leaving her in that rank where my angry father placed her. Nothing, as the Duke writes, can ennoble a plebeian ſoul; but my child is the only inſtance I ever knew of real good principles and integrity of heart, on which confidence and indulgence could make no impreſſion; and I am equally ſurpriſed that, at the ſame ſchool, with the ſame advantages, ſhe is in every reſpect ſo much your inferior."

"But, Madam," cried Roſa, "I had no home to forget with more celerity than I learned—no fond friend to indulge, to flatter—"

"To ruin you—happy girl! But the natural bias of your heart muſt have been the delicate refinements of virtue and honour; from them ſprung the avidity after inſtruction and that emulation of excelling, which could alone make you what you are:—but my poor girl muſt buy the farm for this uncle, and then I think I muſt leave her to get in her harveſt. Ah, Roſa! pity a mother of my rank, whoſe only child muſt move among the vulgar."

Roſa could offer no alleviation of ſo certain and irremediable an evil; ſhe could only endeavour to amuſe the mind on which it was inflicted, and immediately repeated what had paſſed at Lady Muſhroom's viſit.

"Poor woman!" ſaid Lady Denningcourt; "ſhe will find her lettings out and cuttings down no relief

againſt the miſery of living with her poor Sir Sol;—but there are ſervants arrived at Delworth, and yet, I do not underſtand it—"

Lady Denningcourt's wonder alluded to the letter ſhe had written to Magdalena, which yet remained unanſwered; but as that was a circumſtance of which Roſa was ignorant, *ſhe* thought only of the important approaching æra, which ſhe wiſhed, yet dreaded to arrive.

It was ſtill the Counteſs's cuſtom to make her promenade round her poor at Denningcourt; the evening was remarkably fine, and as old Dido was always the feeble attendant of Roſa, as well as now a great favourite of the Counteſs, Betty generally followed the ladies, in order, as Dido knew her better than the footmen, that ſhe might be taken more care of.

They made all the uſual charitable viſits, and were going to croſs the road from the village to the park, when a poſt-chaiſe and four, with the horſes and drivers all decorated with blue ribbons, paſſed, and after turning a little way up the avenue leading to the jointure-houſe, ſtopped.

Lady Denningcourt could neither account for the appearance, nor gueſs at the buſineſs that ſhould carry ſo ſtrange an equipage to the jointure-houſe; and the perſon who alighted from it, and now approached, threw not any light on the ſubject.

It was John Brown; but ſo unlike the John Brown who left the jointure-houſe a few weeks ſince, that even Roſa did not at firſt know him.

He had on a new ſuit of clothes, of the colour of his old maſter's livery, but made plain, without cuffs, collar, or livery lace; his hair was cut *à la militaire*, and plaſtered to his temples with pomatum and powder; his three-cocked military hat with gold lace and ſtiff cockade, was put on one ſide his head; his cambric plaited chitterlin ſtood out ſome inches from his boſom, and he wore a ſnow-white ſpatterdaſh on each leg, which however did not conceal the heavy ſilver buckles on a pair of well-japanned ſhoes; he flouriſhed a handſome cane, and ſaluting the Counteſs with an open palm againſt his hat, after twirling one of his legs, and flouriſhing his ſtick, as he glanced at Betty, in advancing, took off his hat, and offered a letter to Roſa.

"Oh my gracious goodneſs!" cried Betty, "if here ben't John Brown again, with good clothes on his back, and two legs; well, if I did not ſay it was an imp in his likeneſs that comed in a ſhabby coat, and one leg."

"Go thy way, woman," quoth John, with a moſt immoderate flouriſh of cane and arms,

"That man in the world who ſhall report he has
"A better wife, let him in nought be truſted
"For ſpeaking falſe in that——"

Thou art above the deſert of poor John Brown."

The

The only probable gueſs Roſa could hit on was, that John, having diſcovered the Colonel's fortune for his heirs, had brought a letter to her from Doctor Cameron, which his honeſt pride, wounded as it had been by his wife, induced him to deliver in this pompous manner. Smiling at his ſimple reſentment, ſhe received the letter without taking her eyes from the honeſt bearer; but it had attracted the regard of one whoſe eyes had no other employment at that moment.

"My maſter, Madam," ſaid John, raiſing himſelf into a perpendicular elevated poſture, and pulling out his chitterlin, "*My* maſter, my Colonel that *was*, Madam, General Buhanun, that by the honour and glory of the King now is, Madam, Oh! Miſs Roſa, Miſs Roſa," burſting into tears, "my maſter, my bleſſed maſter is alive! and will be with you tomorrow."

The aſtoniſhment—the joy—the almoſt incredulous joy of Roſa was abſorbed in concern for the Counteſs, who ſunk motionleſs and ſenſeleſs on the ground. While Betty, on whoſe ears the welcome ſound ſtill rung, cried out, making a motion toward friendly greeting, which John diſdainfully repelled—"Oh gracious me! is he indeed; well, well, when things be at the worſt, they muſt mend. Oh dear, Oh dear! who'd have thought my ſufferens was ſo near an ind? and if I did not tell our ouſekeeper as I dreamed of Pharaoh's fat kind and lean kind."

The villagers were now thronging round their loved benefactreſs; the white hairs of the aged ſhook, the tears of the middle-aged fell, and the children crept together in diſmal groups, when they ſaw the deathly pale countenance and lifeleſs form of their common mother carried into the neareſt cottage.

The doctor of the village, an honeſt, ſkilful, but, before his misfortunes were known to the Counteſs, diſtreſſed man, was called; he approached her trembling; he ſaw the ſoul of benevolence was in danger of for ever quitting its mild abode; worlds would he have given, that a more ſkilful and leſs intereſted perſon was near:—it was neceſſary to bleed her inſtantly; while this operation was performing, another carriage was heard rattling through the village towards the jointure-houſe;—the crowd attracted curioſity; on being aſked why they were collected with ſuch mournful and anxious looks round the cottage—"It is our benefactreſs—it is her who viſits the ſick—who clothes the poor—who is the mother of deſerted infants—it is the good Counteſs of Denningcourt, who was carried into the cottage dying," they replied.

"Merciful God!" cried a female voice;—the carriage door was opened, the crowd made way, and Roſa, who ſupported her beloved patroneſs, turning her ſtreaming eyes from the ſlow-dropping blood, which, after cutting both arms and feet, followed the lancet into the warm water in which the latter were immerged, ſaw Magdalena.

"Oh,

"Oh, Madam!" exclaimed Roſa, "behold your preſerver and my benefactreſs; ſhe dies—we loſe her for ever, at the moment when her ſorrows only ſhould expire."

Magdalena's fine majeſtic form inſpired reſpect; that reſpect increaſed, when, on the information of her ſervants, it was known that ſhe was the injured mother of the young Earl who was expected at Delworth, and whom report announced ſo different from the uſurper; ſhe perceived the drops which fell faſter from the operator's eyes than blood from the orifices, and her own tears waſhed the lifeleſs hand ſhe preſſed to her lips.

Such had been the conſternation, nobody thought of ſending to the jointure-houſe for a carriage. The only rational being in the group was Mrs. Brown, who, amid the wreck of matter and cruſh of worlds, would have only thought on ſelf, dear, dear ſelf; what ſhe was ſaying to John, and his anſwers, is the epiſode to the tragedy in the cottage;—and as the author has a vaſt deal of buſineſs on her hands, ſhe muſt put the Counteſs, who, to the unſpeakable joy of her poor neighbours began to revive, into the ſtranger's carriage, carry her home, and lay her on her own bed at the jointure-houſe; where alſo we muſt know, Magdalena would ſpeak, in the animated language of truth, her grateful recollections of the obligation ſhe was under to the Counteſs and her late father, as ſoon

as ſhe was able to bear it; but that was not juſt yet.

"John," cried Betty, following her huſband, and ſuch of the crowd who preſumed to attend the carriage within the gates of the park, "Laws! how faſt you do walk, John!"

John flouriſhed away,

"You may as well ſtand on the beach
"And bid the main flood bate his uſual height,"

as talk to me, Betty; my yellow face makes you ſick."

"But is our maſter come home, indeed, and indeed, John Brown?—make *me* ſick! Laws, John!"

"Peace, woman!" roared John,

"———— I never heard yet
"That any of the bolder vices wanted
"Leſs impudence to gainſay what they did,
"Than to perform it at firſt."

Oh woman!

"———— It was cruelty
"To load a fallen man!"

"I load you, John! why, where did you fall?—Laws! how can you talk ſo, when Miſs Roſy herſelf knows I did nothen but cry and fret."

"What! becauſe I was *not* dead? becauſe I ſtood betwixt thee and a mountain of fleſh?"

"Oh dear John! will my ſufferens never ind?—Here, Miſs Roſa will be happy, my maſter will be happy, and every body but poor me!—me, who have had

had ſo much ſickneſs and fretten! me who was left to be put upon by every body, and never ſo much as got a letter."

"Oh what authority and ſhew of truth
"Can cunning ſin cover itſelf withal!"

Nay, hang not upon me,

"Thy bluſh is guiltineſs, not modeſty,"

and thou thinkeſt

"A man's ſoul is in his clothes."

"As to modeſty, John, I am ſure nobody can't ſay any thing to diſparage me in that; and I am ſure, if I had been falſe-hearted to you, I would not never have given no conſent but in the way of marriage;—and our ſtuart was a portly man, and wuth a power of money." Before Betty finiſhed this harangue, John was flung off, and the Lady laid on her bed.

If Roſa was tranſported with joy; if ſhe beheld unutterable meaning in the fine eyes of the beloved ſolitaire of the burnſide; if ſhe read in the ſhort affectionate letter John delivered to her from her patron, an end of all her ſorrows, and a happy preſage that her humble birth would be the only diſadvantage under which ſhe would enter the noble family ſo flatteringly anxious to receive her; and if, above all, ſhe anticipated the avowal of thoſe glowing ſentiments of tenderneſs, that had imperceptibly ſtolen from the paſſionate heart of the amiable Horace into her own, ſhe was not leſs intereſted for Lady Denningcourt; not

leſs affected by her ſituation, nor leſs anxious to relieve the tender embarraſſment of her ſoul.

Magdalena's mind had acquired ſtrength from misfortune;—an adept in the ſchool of experience, her ſtudies at the burnſide had been animated by feeling, and corrected by judgment;—it is true it was not from what men are, but what they ſhould be, that ſhe would have wiſhed to judge the world, had ſhe not been ſo deeply wounded by it. She was ignorant of the part of Lady Denningcourt's hiſtory which her ſituation and exclamations now explained; but inſtead of weeping over her, ſhe took in at once all the delicacies of her ſituation, and entered into them with the more warmth, as theſe in ſome points were of equal concern to her beloved Roſa.

Not to enter into the peculiar and intereſting point of view in which General Buhanun and Lady Denningcourt ſtood to each other, their child was the juſt heir to that fortune, ſhe knew he had, with generous pleaſure, appropriated to Roſa as a marriage portion; nor did his generoſity or pleaſure exceed that with which ſhe knew her ſon would relinquiſh it. But there is a manner of doing every thing, which ſenſible minds only can diſtinguiſh; and ſeveral minutiæ of the arrangements neceſſary to be formed were of a nature that muſt pain, and perhaps a little humble Roſa; ſhe therefore, after whiſpering the Counteſs, begged Roſa to leave her protectreſs and her to ſettle ſome particular points by themſelves.

Roſa,

Roſa, aware of the extreme delicacy of Lady Denningcourt's ſituation in reſpect to the General, and certain that Lady Gauntlet was competent both to conſole and adviſe, gladly obeyed her.

On retiring to her own chamber, ſhe found Betty, who declared John had behaved ſo ill to her, ſhe had cried a whole quarter of an hour.

Roſa deſired ſhe would ſend him to her boudoir, and haſtened thither to meet him.

John Brown had conceived a ſtrong antipathy to the fat ſteward, and extended a certain part of that antipathy to all the domeſtics of the jointure-houſe; his directions from his maſter were, after delivering the letter to Roſa, to take her orders, and then proceed to Delworth.

As he had not yet received theſe orders, he was in waiting in the court-yard, with his chaiſe and horſes, declining, with coldneſs, every invitation into the houſe, when Betty deſired him to follow her to Miſs Roſy.

John obeyed without ſpeaking.

"Dear Mr. Brown," cried Roſa, "what happy tidings have you brought me!"

"Why, Miſs Roſy," cried John,

"Friendſhip is conſtant in all other things,
"Save in the office and affairs of ——"

John ſtopped, and caſt an indignant glance at Betty; "So, Miſs, as

"Grief is proud, and makes his owner ſtout,"

I could not bear to go to Scotland, nor could I bear to ſtop here; and as the world is

"A ſtage, where every man muſt play his part,
"And mine's a ſad one,"

and as

"There is a ſpecial Providence in the fall of a ſparrow,"

I thought I could job a bit here and job a bit there, in my way back to London; and as I was ſure *you* did not want ſuch a friend as poor John Brown, the *yellow-faced cripple* (again Betty had an angry glance), why I reſolved to enquire at all the places where I knew my maſter had property, and ſo ſend you the particulars, but never make folks ſick again."

John's eyes watered, and he drew a fine India handkerchief from his pocket to dry them.

"Lord, John!" cried Betty, "what a nice ſhawl that handkerchief would make; did my maſter give it to you?"

John did not anſwer.

"But I long to hear every particular about my dear patron:—how was he preſerved? why had we no letters? how does he look? is he well——?"

"Why, *Madam!*"

"*Madam*, John! why not addreſs me as you were uſed to do?"

"Why, *Madam!* becauſe you are a *lady*, and will be a lady; and though

"——Pride

" ——— Pride hath no other glaſs
" To ſhew itſelf but pride; for ſupple knees
" Feed arrogance, and are the proud man's fee,"

yet it is fit you ſhould be reſpected; which is not the leſs your due, becauſe

" You win ſtraying ſouls with modeſty,"

and becauſe

" It is the witneſs ſtill of excellency
" To put a ſtrange face on its own perfection."

" There, John!" cried Betty, " you ſee your own books bid you not put no ſtrange faces on your own."

" But your maſter, dear John?" ſaid Roſa, impatiently.

" And *my* maſter, dear John," cried Betty, making another vain attempt to inſinuate her hand between his arm and body.

" Oh, what a maſter!"—and John wiped his eyes with the *nice ſhawl*.

" But Lord, John! he is no more dead nor yourſelf; ſo it don't ſignify nothen to keep repeating old grievances; and I am ſure his ſufferens from the ſalvages han't been no more nor mine;—for to think of my gwain to live with that family of the Croaks, as knows nothen genteel—"

" You may live where you pleaſe, Mrs. Brown."

" Oh no, my dear John, it ſhall be where *you* pleaſe;—I am ſure I always gives up to *you*—only I hope it will be in a comfortable, genteel ſeteeation, and

and not among riff raff, that's all I want; for nobody can ſay as I am proud. But I hope you did not never mention no word to my maſter about frightening me with that nonſenſe about that naſty wooden leg—I am ſure I am monſteracious glad you han't got it in right earneſt."

"But I *have* got it," cried John, impatiently, and ſpringing up a cork leg—"only too like your hard heart, well covered;—ſo you ſee,

"The world is ſtill deceived with ornament;
"The ſeeming truth, which cunning Time puts on,
"Is to entrap the wiſeſt."

"My gracious goodneſs! (Betty had already diſcarded *our ſtuart's geminigig*) is that a nartifiſcal leg? why 'tis almoſt as andſome as the natural one."

Roſa wiſhed Betty would give her huſband leave to talk a little about his maſter.

"Mum!" cried Betty; "I am ſure I have not ſpoke three words."

"Why, *Madam*, (and John bowed) there's no ſuch thing as true courage in that Tippoo, though he is a ſort of a King;

"For that which we in mean men entitle patience,
"Is pale cowardice in nobler breaſts."

But no nobility belongs to him: he did not uſe my maſter in a ſoldier-like manner; for after two of his ſoldiers ſaw him fall, and thinking, as he commanded the ſortie, he would be a prize, carried him to Tippoo's firſt officer, what does he but ſends him with the

the wounded men of their own army, to ſome of the diſtant forts, where my poor maſter——"

John again wiped his eyes.

"Do, John," cried Betty, "let me fetch you one of my clean pocket-handkerchiefs, and put by that nice ſhawl."

"I can't tell you what happened, *Madam*, to my maſter in the dungeon where he lay ſo long; you will hear it all from that ſweet young Lord, Mr. Horace Littleton; he knows how to tell it better than me. Oh! Miſs Roſy, *Madam*, that's a man, indeed;

"——————— When he ſpeaks,
"The air, a chartered libertine, is ſtill;
"And the mute wonder lurketh in men's ears
"To ſteal his ſweet and honey'd ſentences."

Roſa could aſk no more queſtions; her cheeks glowed, and her eyes filled.

John modeſtly aſked if ſhe had any orders; and as ſoon as a gentle "No, John," iſſued from her lips, he left the boudoir without a look at Betty.

"Lord! Lord!" cried ſhe, "when will my ſufferens end?"

Roſa, thinking neither of her nor her ſufferens, took a ramble by moonlight.

CHAP.

CHAP. XII.

" Self-intereſt, it is agreed, is the prime mover of human actions.
" Perhaps that cannot be denied; but a contempt of *low, mer-*
" *cenary ſelf-intereſt* is the ſure conſequence of the ambition
" which ſelf-intereſt of a higher order always inſpires."

HOWEVER indefinable the feelings of Lady Denningcourt when ſhe was convinced Wallace Buhanun yet lived, there was one point, on which no argument could be admitted either in her opinion or that of Lady Gauntlet, which was, the indiſpenſible propriety of informing him of the exiſtence of his child previous to the propoſed arrangements for Roſa's marriage; and this was a matter of ſuch delicacy and importance, that the means of doing it, with the leaſt ſhock to Roſa's delicacy, ſeemed the only thing to be conſidered.

So well, the Counteſs declared, ſhe knew the ſoul of Wallace Buhanun, that he would never be prevailed on to enter a houſe in which ſhe reſided as the widow of Lord Denningcourt, whether he did or did not know at this time her name and rank. The latter, indeed, Lady Gauntlet thought moſt probable, from the manner in which he had heard the preſent ſituation of Roſa mentioned.

So

So entirely ſatisfied was ſhe alſo that her firſt attachment would have been ſanctioned by the laws of her country, had ſhe not innocently conſented to marry Lord Denningcourt; and ſo ſolemn did ſhe ſtill conſider her firſt engagement, that her heart, which inceſſantly reproached her for the laſt, ſhrunk from the idea of meeting a man ſo fatal to her race, and ſo injured by herſelf; and were it not that juſtice and honour, not to mention maternal affection, enforced the obligation of maternal duty, ſhe would have gone to Athelane, and ſtopped there as long as the General remained at Delworth. "But this child!" ſhe cried, weeping, "this daughter! for whom I am to demand the ſuffrages of a parent—ah! in what a ſtate will he find her! naturalized with inferior people—her lot caſt among thoſe with whom neither of her parents can aſſociate, and repugnant to the habits, connexion, and manners ſuitable to her birth and their rank. Oh, Lady Gauntlet!" ſhe added, paſſionately wringing her hands, "could you have believed my father, him who ſo cordially ſympathized in your misfortunes, could have dealt ſo hard by me and my child?"

Lady Gauntlet, who was charmed with the mild graces and intereſting manner of the amiable Counteſs, endeavoured to ſooth the inquietude of her mind, by adducing the tender propriety of her own conduct throughout the whole of this affecting tranſaction. "There really was," ſhe ſaid, "no accounting for the

the turn ſome minds took; it had been obſerved of high deſcent, that it was never diſregarded but by thoſe who were conſcious of not poſſeſſing it. We," ſhe continued, "my dear Counteſs, have no ſuch conſciouſneſs about us, yet I am not one of its bigots;—your daughter is by no means an unique in the art of ſinking—if, indeed, a young perſon, whoſe mind is not contaminated, may be juſtly ſaid to ſink. 'Tis a mortifying truth, that people of rank complain of the increaſing inſubordination they themſelves provoke: What, for inſtance, can be more abſurd than for ſuch women as Lady Gauntlet to demand reſpect, or ſuch men as her huſband, and the Earl, his late brother, to value themſelves on their noble deſcent? High rank, adorned with congenial virtues, will enforce regard; the lower order naturally love the virtues by which they are benefited, and reſpect the example which it is both their intereſt and duty to follow; but, on the contrary, when they hear of the enormities committed by ſome titled unbluſhing woman of quality, or ſome lawleſs high-blooded libertine, what can be more ridiculous than to expect the hatred and contempt they excite ſhould be qualified by a remembrance of whoſe daughter or whoſe ſon they are. It is not, indeed, to their advantage it ſhould be ſo, ſince, if there be any thing *worth* remembering in their families, the contraſt between paſt and preſent muſt become more ſtriking; and as people of high rank can only be ſelf-debaſed, ſo commoners, who are ſelf-ennobled by their integrity,

grity, riſe, as they ſink in the eſtimation of both God and man. One cannot, indeed, but wiſh your daughter had been more ſenſible of her own value; but ſhe muſt make a family;—the name of Croak, with your countenance, and that of her father, may become reſpectable, and, comparatively, you may call yourſelf a happy mother. Think of poor Kattie Buhanun! ſhe could never forget her beauty and family; her poor mother talked of nothing elſe."

Lady Denningcourt felt the juſtice, as well as kindneſs of Lady Gauntlet's remarks;—"Perhaps," ſaid ſhe, "had I never ſeen Roſa, I might not have felt ſo heavily my daughter's deficiencies."

"Oh, my friend, but Roſa *is* an unique; your daughter is *not*, that is all."

"But had I ſuch a child to bear the olive-branch to her father;—to mediate between his indignant anger and her mother's unintended crime;—to inſpire him with paternal tenderneſs, and to give me peace! Oh! Lady Gauntlet, I never look at her face—never hear her ſpeak, or admire the graceful motion of her lovely form, but my heart ſinks into deſpondence, and I am ready to ſin againſt her Maker and mine; and then her reſemblance to her patron—does it not ſeem a mockery of fate to fill me with impoſſible wiſhes and vain regrets?"

"It was," Lady Gauntlet replied, "a concatenation of uncommon circumſtances, like that which, after ſo long a period, had reſtored the General almoſt from

from the grave; but by no means, either in the one caſe or the other, of that great import, as to make or mar the happineſs of any party concerned, after the certainty that, however faulty, Elinor was really her daughter, and that the General, her father, ſtill lived; every other conſideration were ſubordinate and tranſient,

"Like bubbles in the ſea of matter borne,
"They riſe, they break, and to that ſea return."

"But how ſhall I wean my heart from its fond attachment to this lovely girl? I have indulged it till it is become a part of myſelf; what a deſert will this houſe appear when her ſoft voice and light tread are no longer heard!"

"We muſt think of that," ſaid Lady Gauntlet, "when we have reſolved how to get over the firſt embarraſſment; the General will be here to-morrow."

"Not *here!* Lady Gauntlet, not *here!*—I ſhould expire with ſhame to ſee him; I cannot ſee him indeed, any where;—I think I can never ſee him; to know that he lives, that he is happy——"

"And well married!"

"Lady Gauntlet!"

"Nay, my dear Counteſs, I was only willing to try how far female heroiſm could go; but if you pleaſe, we will take pillow counſel before we make our final determination.—There is our girl—what a picture! gliding under the lunar ray, her light drapery gently

gently agitated by the calm breeze;—Oh, how often have I contemplated her charming figure with pleaſure, while the impreſſion of her ſweet conciliating manners have been warm on my mind!"

Roſa was paſſing the window; ſhe obeyed the firſt ſummons, and had the felicity to perceive Lady Denningcourt compoſed and quite recovered. They retired after a ſlight repaſt, and the Counteſs agreeing to baniſh Roſa from their breakfaſt-table, Lady Gauntlet whiſpered her to prepare for a viſit to Delworth.

"Geminigig!" cried Betty, when ſhe attended in the chamber, "why, Lord! Miſs Roſa, what a rigmirol ſtory this here is about my maſter; and I aſſure you, John Brown keeps on his high ropes; but what do you think our ouſekeeper ſes?—ſhe ſes as ſhe thinks we ſhall have a double wedden; the more the merrier ſay I—but who'd a thoft that pale-faced Mr. Littleton, as uſed to write for Sir Solomon Muſhroom, would turn out to be a Lord; they may well ſay nobody knows their own luck;—I am ſure my ſufferens have laſted long enough, and as to John Brown's keepen in the ſulks— But pray, Miſs, is it true as you are agwain to have a great fortin, and be Lady Gauntlet directly?"

"Neither one nor the other, Betty."

"Oh geminigig, as our——"

"I think,

"I think, Betty, you had better leave off that exclamation, if you wiſh to get your huſband out of his ſulks."

"Why, Miſs, ſo I have left it off before him; and as to our ſtuart, why you know, Miſs, he is gone to London, or ſomewhere near abouts, with Mrs. Moggy M'Laurin, poor old ſoul! I ſhould not wonder if ſhe had a colt's tooth, and made up a match with our ſtuart:—to be ſure he is a portly man, and wuth a power of money."

Roſa, who in general ſuffered Mrs. Brown to run on her own way, was now as much diſpleaſed to hear of the portly ſtuart and his power of money, as John Brown himſelf could be, angrily bid Betty get ready to attend her to Delworth in the morning.

"There now!" cried Betty, "now you are angry too, Miſs Roſy, and I am ſure that's more nor what I never inſpected from you, becauſe I was always good to you, even when you was a ſarvant, and what's more, a beggar, and that I ſhall alway ſay; but there is no ind to my misfortune."

The chamber conſultation of the two Counteſſes did not break up till near noon, when the carriage, being ready, Roſa was admitted.

"You are leaving me, my Roſa," ſaid Lady Denningcourt, weeping; "I have no hope the ſad evening of my days will be cheered by your ſweet ſociety; 'tis a deprivation moſt grievous to my heart, but the hard leſſon of my life has been to ſtudy reſignation.—

You

You go from Denningcourt, where that negative happineſs which attends on quietude, on a kind of reſt of nature, could only be hoped, to Delworth, where the animated ſenſibility of your fine mind will be called into active enjoyment; where a maternal friend, a generous patron, and tender lover, will rejoice in your ſociety for the ſame reaſon that I regret it—their own felicity is dependant on your's. The exchange, my amiable girl, is to your advantage, elſe the conflict I feel in parting with you would be inſupportable;—you will ſometimes ſteal to me; I cannot doubt but I ſhall live in your thoughts."

Roſa threw herſelf at the feet of the amiable Counteſs, whoſe arms encircled her; their tears were blended.

Lady Gauntlet, though affected herſelf, endeavoured to carry the hope of the parting friends to future happy meetings;—"At leaſt," ſaid ſhe, "if you loſe the daughter, you will have the mother; I will certainly take Roſa's place at whatever houſe Lady Denningcourt ſhall pleaſe to occupy."

"Oh!" cried Roſa, throwing her arms around Lady Denningcourt's neck, "why muſt we go without you? and why, in the moment that my heart is filled with thankful joy for the bleſſing I am going to meet, does it feel a pang ſo bitter, ſo repugnant at leaving you? But I *will* ſteal to you; yes, before I take pleaſure to my heart, you ſhall ſhare it; I will inform you of every thing while this frightful chaſm muſt laſt—ſurely that will not, cannot be long."

Lady

Lady Gauntlet hinting, that as the General and her ſon muſt now be within a few miles, there was no anſwering for the ſpeed of impatience, and therefore not finding her at Delworth——

"Not *here!* they muſt not come *here*," cried Lady Denningcourt, gaſping for breath. "I commit myſelf and my child to you, Lady Gauntlet; amply as it is in my power, and my heart to provide for her, I would not, Oh, it would kill me, to know Wallace Buhanun was indifferent to *his* child, the child of Elinor Athelane."

"We have ſettled all this, I believe, Counteſs," replied Lady Gauntlet gravely, hurt for Roſa, whoſe intereſt this warm ſolicitude, without every explanation, might be ſuppoſed to affect.

It was not that the attachment of Lady Denningcourt was leſs ſincere, or her intention towards Roſa leſs generous than that of Magdalena; but the mind of the former, though inured to mild and patient endurance, was at this period enervated by the delicate embarraſſments of her ſituation; it was the *pride*, not the intereſt of maternal feelings that rendered her ſo anxious the father ſhould acknowledge the child, and ſhe had already reſolved on preſenting Roſa with an equivalent for any loſs of fortune from the General ſhe might ſuſtain by any ſuch acknowledgment;—while the latter, wiſe, noble, and conſiſtent, reſolved to reject all advantages—it was *Roſa*, not the General's fortune, ſhe wiſhed her ſon to poſſeſs; and it was

herſelf,

herſelf, not any local advantage, that muſt make him happy.

After repeated embraces, after floods of tears, and ſighing reluctance on both ſides, Roſa followed Lady Gauntlet into her carriage.

Roſa was always above the mere punctilios of ceremony:—the warm embrace of Magdalena, an embrace that ſeemed to greet the bride of her ſon, gave an emotion to her heart that ſent the pure blood into her cheeks; ſhe was indeed going to the houſe of her lover, and though under protection of one of the beſt of women, there was ſomething unpleaſant in that; but the impoſſibility of receiving her benefactor at the jointure-houſe, and the eager deſire ſhe felt to fly to his feet, conquered all falſe modeſty in reſpect to the firſt interview with Horace.

They paſſed through a private gate, to avoid the crowd of tenants and country people who were, they heard, aſſembled near the lodge on the common, to welcome their rightful Lord, by a delightful and romantic, though almoſt imperceptible aſcent to the beautiful flat on which the fine Gothic building ſtood; on the clear baſin in front, the little veſſel was all ready, decked with garlands of flowers, muſical inſtruments, and new ſilk colours, to receive the Earl.

The profuſion of fine ſummer flowers which impregnated the air with ſweets when Roſa firſt ſaw this charming place, were now ſucceeded by autumnal plants and exotics, not leſs beautiful, though leſs

highly ſcented with natural perfumes; but the proſpect round was improved by the variegated fields which, having now yielded their abundance, were covered with cattle; and the ſtill content which reigns over the face of huſbandry when their harveſt is got in, ſeemed ſpread over the many miles the eye took in from Delworth-houſe.

"This is really enchanting, Roſa," ſaid Lady Gauntlet, with perhaps a ſentiment of indignant regret at her ſon's having ſo long been deprived of the poſſeſſion of his right.

Roſa was recurring to her firſt ſight of the *heaven* which Mrs. Woudbe had already thought her own; and as her eye wandered from the caſtle to the jointure-houſe, wonder, joy, thankful gratitude, and confidence in coming happineſs, brought the fluſh of ſenſibility to her cheeks, and the tear of pleaſure into her eyes.

Lord Gauntlet had, with a preſage of delight glowing in his boſom, ſent a confidential ſervant expreſs to Delworth the inſtant he had obtained the General's promiſe to go there. The ſtanding furniture were all as Roſa had left it, ſome additional ornaments, and a rich ſervice of plate excepted; but in general ſhe might have fancied, from the appearance of all around her, it was impoſſible ſuch extraordinary changes, as had taken place ſince ſhe left it, could be real.

Chriſtiana,

Chriſtiana, the now ſettled houſekeeper, welcomed her Lady with tears of joy; and after gazing at Roſa with evident approbation, retired.

"I hope this forin ouſekeeper underſtands Englis," ſaid Betty to Mrs. Ferguſon, as Peggy was now called, "elſe I am ſure we ladies' maids muſt have a room to ourſelves. But pray, Miſs Roſy," ſtepping after Roſa, and whiſpering, "can you think where John Brown is?"

"Gone to meet his maſter, perhaps, Betty."

"Well, Miſs, I don't ſay nothen againſt that; but I think as he mought have paid his wife ſome perſpection before ſtrangers, and a forin ouſekeeper; but my ſufferens——"

"Are very great, to be ſure, but I can't ſtop to hear them."

"Gracious goodneſs! Miſs Roſy, why you are as light as a feather; well, faint heart never won fair lady, ſo I may as well be light too, for all I ſee no ind to my ſufferens."

Roſa, who was familiar enough with the apartments of Delworth-houſe to do the honours of it to Lady Gauntlet, pointed to her notice the ſeveral little incidents in which ſhe had been intereſted; particularly Lady Gauntlet's dreſſing-room, that where ſhe had been ſo painfully ſurpriſed by the letter ſigned "H. Montreville," — and that elegant drawing-room, where ſhe had taken what ſhe called her trial. The apartment of the young ladies, where the books,

muſic, works, and drawing remained, with the needles, pencils, crayons, and open leſſons, juſt as they had left them, gave both ladies a pang. They were turning haſtily into the picture-gallery, when John Brown, who had already diſcarded his cork-leg, as being more trouble than the wooden one, ſtumped up to inform them his maſter and the young Lord were approaching; that the country people at the laſt town had taken the horſes from the chaiſe; and though it was warm work, relieved each other, till the tenants, who met them a mile off, inſiſted on their right;—the townſmen had heard reaſon, and—hark! here they are!"

They liſtened; the muſicians, who were now afloat in the veſſel, ſtruck up, "See the conquering hero comes!" At the firſt huzza, John's three-cocked military hat was thrown up, and his loud repeated cheers drove the ladies as far from him as the gallery would admit.

"Huzza! huzza!" cried the crowds, who, with the moſt reſpectful care of the fine walks, drew and followed the carriage, over which, and the horſes, were thrown garlands of laurel tied with bunches of blue and red ribbons; "Huzza! huzza!" echoed John, ſtumping up to the window, inſtead of going to the door to receive his maſter as he alighted;—"Huzza!"

"'Tis he, I ken the manners of his gait,
"He riſes on his toe; that ſpirit of his
"In aſpiration liſts him from the earth."

"Oh,

"Oh, my dear maſter—" and Betty's nice ſhawl was lifted to his eyes.

Lord Gauntlet's eyes eagerly explored every window, till he met his ſoul's deſire in a reciprocal glance from Roſa; he ſaw her, and ſaw nothing elſe; and, for the author of this long hiſtory piques herſelf on the truth, although Roſa's firſt benefactor, her friend, her more than father's eyes were alſo fixed on her, ſhe forgot, in that moment, that there were more than two people in this wide habitable world; and no young lady, who, after parting with the firſt object of her choice, when fate and fortune were equally adverſe to the hope of ever meeting again, need be told, thoſe two were her lover and herſelf. From this bliſsful reverie ſhe was, however, rouſed by freſh ſhouts from the multitude, ſeconded by John Brown; and before ſhe recovered from her confuſion, felt herſelf preſſed to the boſom of General Buhanun, and ſaw the elegant, graceful, and accompliſhed Horace kneeling at her feet.

To thoſe aforeſaid young ladies who have been in ſimilar, though not exactly the ſame circumſtances, we leave the definition of Roſa's feelings towards her lover; but who *can* define the enthuſiaſtic gratitude which guſhed in torrents from her eyes, when, though ſhe had no remembrance of the perſon or manners of her benefactor till ſhe ſaw him, her recollection became every moment more acute; paſt ſcenes returned; ſhe was taken from the well-remembered white ſteps

of Mrs. Feverſham's houſe; cleaned from the filth of beggary; reſerved from the danger of periſhing for want, and received into the warm heart of him, through whoſe arms ſhe ſlipped at this moment, to embrace his feet, and waſh them with her tears.

Horace ventured to ſeize her white hand, and preſs it to his lips, as her patron raiſed her again to his boſom.

"She is indeed," ſaid he, viewing her with attention, and apparent delight, "beauty itſelf;—I never ſaw a woman altogether ſo perfect; what eyes, what complexion, and what a form!—You muſt forgive me, Roſa; I am your father, and may be allowed to find out beauties in my own, to which common eyes are blind—yes, the dimpled faſcination round that lovely mouth is the ſame; Oh, how irreſiſtible did I find it, when ſcarce another feature was perceptible—and that voice, my ſoul was enchanted by it."

Roſa glanced a tearful remembrance of Lady Denningcourt at Lady Gauntlet.

The General conſidered it as a tacit reproach; he apologized to the Dowager, while Horace murmured a few rapturous expreſſions in Roſa's ear. They became more compoſed, as the certainty of preſent happineſs, and hope of future, were confirmed. They walked to the front of the houſe; the muſic was ſtill playing on the water; the crowd, for whoſe entertainment an ox was roaſting whole on the common in front

front of the great gates, where alſo the prudent ſteward had conveyed ſeveral hogſheads of ale, and other liquors, waited to give the new Earl and his friends a parting cheer, and then departed, highly gratified with his condeſcenſion and munificence; and need it be ſaid the dinner quartette at home was a happy one, or that the ſucceeding evening could be leſs than delightful?

"Oh, my deareſt benefactor," cried Roſa, kiſſing the General's hand, "by what miracle are you reſtored to us?"

"By no miracle, nor even, in the ſervice in which I was engaged, by uncommon means. I parted with Horace, as he will tell you, on the eve of a projected ſortie, which indeed was a forlorn hope, after I had given him, as far as depended on me, the moſt valuable jewel I poſſeſſed; *he will alſo tell you about that too.*

"I was wounded in the early part of the engagement, but it was a conſiderable time before I fainted from loſs of blood;—two of the enemy's ſubalterns had marked my fall, and thought me a prize worth carrying to their commander;—he ordered me to be conveyed from the field of battle with their own wounded officers; and it was this circumſtance that prevented my being ſent to Seringapatam, where General Matthews, and many brave men, were murdered in cold blood; and where I ſhould probably have ſhared the ſame fate, had I been with them. We, on the con-

trary, were ſent to a fort in the interior of the kingdom, where, as the keeper had *ſome* humanity, I might have lingered many years, had not a report reached Lord C——, that many Europeans were kept back, in different parts of Tippoo's dominions, after he had pretended to have delivered them all up.

"The tyrant was by this time humbly ſuing for peace; but the Britiſh General refuſed to liſten to any terms, till, as a preliminary ſtep, every European priſoner was liberated. Tippoo was neither in a ſituation to refuſe, nor to brave the reſentment of ſo humane a commander if he had been detected in deceiving him. Among the objects ejected from the miſerable dungeons I was one, ſo much in diſhabille, that my own corps did not know me. I had not made my toilet, my pretty Roſa, above five years; my beard and nails muſt therefore have been very formidable; I was, however, ſoon recognized; and ſuch was the indignation of our ſoldiers at my long confinement, it was perhaps well for Tippoo that peace was ſigned. Well, my charming Roſa, there was no miracle in all this. The only very ſtrange circumſtance attending it is, that while chained to the floor of a dungeon, I obtained a complete conqueſt over myſelf. The kingdom of every wiſe man is in his own breaſt; ſo ſaid a Scotch philoſopher; and perhaps it is the kingdom moſt arduous to govern properly; mine, at leaſt, was in a ſtate of actual rebellion againſt my peace many years, *too many*, preceding my confinement;

ent ; but if five years lying in a dungeon, without the light of heaven, or any other light thrown on the ſubject, will not enable a man to conquer his paſſions, there is no raſhneſs in the concluſion that nothing will.

" I loved a beautiful woman once to ſuch deſperation, that having armed my fatal hand againſt her brother, my friend's life, I thought the next beſt thing was to arm it againſt my own: I was not quite ſo ſucceſsful in the laſt attempt as the firſt, becauſe I was deſtined to hear that my wife was the wife of another, and to lie five years in a dungeon. As the firſt did not deſtroy me, though I could only hear the fact without the particulars, I thought myſelf invulnerable; and having nothing more amuſing to do, uſed to ponder whole days, weeks, and months, on cauſes and effects: the reſult was, that I acquitted myſelf, and, what was more hard, I acquitted my angel wife. My crime was involuntary; and ſo, after a fair trial, which, chained myſelf to the ground, I could not help allowing her, and admitting all her goodneſs and virtue to plead in her favour I believed her's to be.— From this moment I found I could ſuffer with a vaſt deal more eaſe to myſelf: my temper, which had long been in a ſhocking ſtate of irritation, reſumed its firſt placid caſt; and though I warn every body to be very much afraid of me, I came to Europe in ſuch good humour, that even the honours and reward heaped on me at my return, has not yet ſpoiled my temper; the King has thought proper to put me upon the ſtaff, and

the Company have made me a richer man than I deſired or deſerve; and yet I feel no alteration in myſelf, and this is really a miracle. My poor honeſt fellow, John Brown, has been more unfortunate without a ſimilar effect."

"Poor John," joined Roſa—"his wife—"

"Ah, Roſa! his wife indeed is a trial more ſevere, I am afraid, than my dungeon: I think he ſeems wife ſick—but ſhe is with you?"

"For this hiſtory of your ſuffering and conqueſt, General, I promiſe," ſaid Lady Gauntlet, "to reward you, if you will take your coffee in my dreſſing-room to-morrow morning *tête-à-tête*."

"Take care, Madam," replied the General, "what you do. I have not been a month on the ſtaff; I ſhall be expected to diſtinguiſh myſelf; you are not indeed a married woman, and therefore, if your character ſhould ſuffer, the notoriety would not be ſufficient to give me any ſort of eclat;—that, I warn you, is your only ſafeguard againſt the attack of my crutch ſtick."

It was now only that Roſa obſerved he walked with one.

"It was my hard bed in the dungeon, my dear," ſaid he, obſerving concern in Roſa's looks.

"I am deſperate," rejoined Lady Gauntlet; "and to prove it will not trouble you to come to me, your reward you ſhall have, and I will bring it to you in your dreſſing-room."

"I hope," replied the General, "you have well conſidered this matter; ſince you know how impoſſible it will be for this poor boy and girl to amuſe themſelves while I am locked up with your Ladyſhip?"

"They will do as well as they can;—and Roſa muſt ſhew Horace her trial room;—and, my dear, ſuppoſe you give him the hiſtory of the *naughty letter*."

Roſa bluſhed, but did not refuſe Lord Gauntlet's earneſt requeſt for the ſame favour from her, his mother offered the General.—Lord and Lady Gauntlet's hiſtory and misfortunes furniſhed the next topic of converſation till ſupper.

With what proud delight did John place himſelf perpendicularly behind his maſter's chair; in how kind an accent were the orders given him; and how adroitly did he manage his wooden leg in flying to execute them!

How enraptured did Horace gaze on his charming Roſa! how often did he bleſs the enthuſiaſm of the beſt of mothers, which carried her to Scotland! and how ſincerely did he rejoice in the event, that proved his adored Walſingham to be her loved Roſa, and the *protegée* of his patron! and with what ſoft reproach did he advert to the impreſſion ſhe had ſuffered to take place in her mind, to his prejudice! with what ſweet confuſion did ſhe now wonder how ſhe could, for one moment, believe him to be the minion of the con-

temptible Mrs. Woudbe! and Oh! with what more than rapture did the fond mother contemplate the two beings moſt dear to her on earth; and while her heart overflowed with tender recollections, ſhe ſighed, "We only want my father now!"

"Ah! Madam, *only*," repeated Roſa.

"Why, whom elſe do we want?" aſked the General; "your patroneſs, Lady Denningcourt? You ſee how it is, Roſa; I adviſe you to take care of Horace, for even a battered old beau is caught up before one can look round. I had half a mind to fall in love with this Lady Denningcourt, if Lady Gauntlet had not quite preſſed me into her ſervice."

Roſa burſt into tears; the General, not conſcious how much he ſpoke to her feelings, was alarmed, and Horace half diſtracted.

Roſa's heart was on her lips; ſhe forgot the caution given her by the two ladies; her fine features were full of meaning.

The General doubted whether her emotion did not proceed from a fear that ſhe might have a rival in his affections and fortune:—the dear girl, he thought, could have no conception to what exceſs ſhe was beloved, and it was natural for her to be tenacious in every thing relative to her reception into ſo honourable and opulent a family. "I talk of falling in love," ſaid he, "but nobody will return the paſſion of an old ſoldier who is poor; my fortune is all your's, irrevocably your's."

"*All*,

"*All*, my dear father?—you have bid me call you ſo—not all, God forbid—you have one other claimant."

"The Major's children—I ſhall certainly conſider them, if it were only for their father's kindneſs to you."

"But, Sir, is there no other?"

"None that I admit."

"Ah, my father!"

Lady Gauntlet looked ſurpriſed; ſhe neither underſtood how far Roſa meant to go, nor what were her motives; ſhe even began to doubt whether Lady Denningcourt might not have ſent her ſome inſtructions ſince their parting.

"I can't comprehend you," ſaid the General; "but I ſwear, by the great God, you are my——"

Roſa put her hand to his mouth. "Yes," he continued, with vehemence, "yes, I ſwear, by the great God, you are my ſole heireſs."

Roſa, who was herſelf too partial to Elinor to doubt ſhe would be beloved when known, begged him not to ſwear *any* thing till he had heard *every* thing.

"What is there to hear? This is trifling," and the General looked grave.

"You will breakfaſt with Lady Gauntlet to-morrow, my dear father."

"And you, my dear angel," joined Montreville, "will breakfaſt——"

"With you."

The

The General then rung for his ſervant; his lameneſs was very ſlight after a little exerciſe; but in the moment of beginning to move, he could not walk without ſupport. Horace offered his arm, and John ſtumped on before with lights.

Betty officiouſly appeared at the chamber-door, and, in ſpite of John's forbidding looks, was all ſmiles and curtſies; in the midſt of which ſhe made a diſcovery of great importance, which was, that though her huſband ſtill kept on his high ropes himſelf, he had not been complaining to his maſter.

"I am glad to ſee you, Mrs. Brown," ſaid the General, ſtopping as he paſſed her; "I hope you have been as good a wife to my honeſt fellow as the world would let you."

As Betty had a conſcioufneſs about her which prevented her anſwer, ſhe could only cry, and curtſey to the ground.

"Well, my good girl," continued the General, "you muſt take care of him now; you ſee what his love for his maſter has made him ſuffer."

"Suffer, your Honour," ſobbed Betty, "I am ſure my ſufferens would milt the very ſlinted ſtones."

"Poor girl! good night," and the General put a heavy purſe into her hand.

Betty continued curtſeying with a handkerchief at her eyes, till John flung the door to with violence.

"That's manners, now," ſaid Betty; "howſever, as I always told John, fat ſorrow is better nor lean ſorrow

ſorrow at any time; and ſo I ſhall firſt go and ſee what I have got in the purſe, and then tend Miſs Roſy. Lord, only to think of her being a lady after all!"

The next morning Roſa paſſed more time at her toilet, and yet left it leſs ſatisfied than uſual. Her legs trembled as ſhe tottered down ſtairs; and when led by her handſome Lord to the bow-window in the little drawing-room, her heart beat with ſuch unremitting violence, ſpeech was denied her; but ſweet as are even the pains of a firſt paſſion when its baſis is honour, and its ſupport virtue, how ſoon, how very ſoon does mutual confidence baniſh all reſtraint!

Lord Gauntlet was the very ſame Horace Montreville whoſe paſſion for her, when ſhe was a ſuſpicious character, was blended with reſpect; and Roſa was the ſame frank ingenuous creature, who only feared to loſe his eſteem by that confeſſion which was ever ready to burſt from her lips.

Their hearts were united, their language was that of truth, and every expreſſion of tenderneſs chaſtened by ſentiment and delicacy.

"'Horace,'" cried Roſa, "I have two mothers; your's is one, and you know how dear ſhe has ever been to me; Lady Denningcourt, I can never tell you what ſhe is;—ſhall I introduce you to my other mother?"

Horace reached her paraſol; ſhe put her willing arm under his, and they rambled to the jointure-houſe;—there, like the genius of contemplation, ſat the lovely

lovely Lady Denningcourt in her boudoir; the moment she beheld Rosa, they were locked in each other's arms.

The "how do you?" and "what do you?" which furnish grand subjects for the letters and conversations of modern friends, were here discarded—it was sincere and animated affection which warmed the hearts, and taught the sublime phrases of true esteem to the trio now present, and marked every passing moment with interest.

Lady Denningcourt, conscious of the subject of that *tête-à-tête* Horace laughingly adverted to, dared not press their stay, though she feared to see them go;—but Rosa, having engaged to steal away as often as possible, and Horace having promised secrecy, they returned to Delworth.

The conference had ended; but not with all the consequences Lady Gauntlet wished and expected.

The General, notwithstanding the boasted placid cast of his temper, was exceedingly affected; he recollected to have seen Elinor, when a fine child, with Doctor Croak; he considered her marriage as the consequence of her attachment to the family with whom she had been brought up, and rather applauded than condemned it; he heard, with profound attention, the proofs of her birth, as given by Mrs. Moggy M'Laurin, whom he knew and esteemed, and from Doctor Croak, whom he also knew, but did *not* esteem; and he was told of the kindness of the Duke

of

of Athelane to his daughter, and the great views ſhe had diſappointed, without aſking a ſingle queſtion about her mother.

Lady Gauntlet, who had been ſolemnly enjoined by Lady Denningcourt not to mention her, except led to do ſo by circumſtances, did not feel herſelf at liberty to enter further than he himſelf choſe to advert to in his ſtory, ſaid nothing more about his daughter than anſwering his interrogatories.

"I thought," ſaid the General, "I had conquered my rebellious paſſions, and eſtabliſhed peace in the little kingdom of my own boſom; but the evil, I fear, has not been radically cured; I muſt certainly ſee this poor child; and as certainly my little *protegée's* intereſt will ſuffer. You need not ſpeak, Lady Gauntlet, your heart is that ſort of one, with which mine holds intellectual converſe; I am almoſt grieved to ſay, that I fear I never can love my daughter as well as I do our dear Roſa; but I dare not define my own feelings in regard to her; ſhe is the child of love, of my Elinor, my dear loſt wife—my child;—forgive me, Madam—I am indiſpoſed—one of my old head-aches——"

The General trembled; the old tremor on his voice, and the ſalt rheum in his eyes returned.

Lady Gauntlet left him with a ſort of diſappointed ſenſation at her heart, that carried her to her cloſet, inſtead of going immediately, as ſhe had intended, to the jointure-houſe; and the whole long morning was left to the happy Horace and his lovely Roſa.

CHAP.

CHAP. XIII.

" Give theſe trifles a corner in your cabinet, where they may be
" ſheltered from thoſe daring critics, who, without producing any
" thing of their own, determine, with aſſurance, on the works of
" others."

THAT there is no ſuch thing as perpetual happineſs but at Gangaridian, where one cannot go without griffins, or at Eldarado, where one cannot go at all, was proved by our heroine and her lover, on the former hinting at the propriety of making ſome alteration in her dreſs before dinner, previous to which the latter was extremely urgent to hear the " I love," from her lips, which he had all day read in her eyes; and he was no doubt properly miſerable, when, on failing to prevail, he, with an arm encircling her waiſt, and a white hand claſped in his, rather whiſpered than ſung—

" In all my Emma's beauty bleſt,
" Amid profuſion I muſt pine,
" If, when ſhe gave me up her breaſt,
" Its panting tenant were not——"

" mine," he would have ſaid, had he not been interrupted.

" I will go in, fellow," ſaid a voice at the door; " you ſhall not prevent me; do you know who I am?"

" No—

"No—nor have I the ſmalleſt curioſity about the matter;—I know my Lord is engaged, and that it is my duty to prevent impertinent people from breaking in upon him."

"I know your Lord very well, and he knows me; he would not call me impertinent;—Miſs Walſingham is my particular friend, and——"

"And pray who is Miſs Walſingham?—ſhe is not known here, I believe, nor any other Miſs of your acquaintance."

"Well, don't make yourſelf unhappy about that; I muſt and will ſee Lord Gauntlet; he is in this room;—I know every room in this houſe, and will enter."

"I muſt beg leave to ſay you ſhall not enter."

"I will."

"You ſhall not till I apprize my Lord."

"It is Lady Muſhroom," cried Roſa, and immediately, the lady proving too hard for the valet, in ſhe bounced;—but in what a ſituation!

"Ah! my dear Miſs Walſingham, how glad I am to ſee you:—I am in a worſe pickle now than when I met you on Holborn-hill, at that vile chandler-woman's:—Oh! Lord Gauntlet, you muſt remember *me*, though I am ſure I ſhould not have known you, you are ſo grown, ſo improved, ſo perfectly a man of faſhion.—I am come to aſk your protection, and as I know you won't refuſe it—here (burſting into tears, and throwing herſelf into an armed chair) I ſhall ſtay; I am ſure it broke my heart to leave this ſweet place."

Lady

Lady Muſhroom was indeed in a pickle: her gold muſlin hung in tatters, and the rich lace trimmings torn to rags; her auburn wig, which ſhe thought more becoming than her own dark locks, drawn to one corner of her head, ſo that it looked as if adorned with two diſtinct ſorts of hair; one broken ear-ring; her face and neck all over ſcratches, and her arms covered with bruiſes.

Roſa, independent of the concern ſhe would have felt for a ſtranger in ſuch a ſituation, had a ſort of partial regard for her tattered Ladyſhip; ſhe rung for her ſervant, and requeſted Lady Muſhroom would accept ſome other clothes.

"Gracious goodneſs!" cried Betty, "as ſure as death, that cheatin old rogue, Sir Solomon Muſhroom, and my old Miſtreſs, Madam Feverſham, han't been doing nothen more nor leſs than fitine."

"Go, you impertinent," replied Lady Muſhroom, accepting Roſa's offered arm, while the Earl viewed her with amazement—"go! Sir Solomon will never cheat again."

"Geminigig! won't he!—that's good news;—but then I am ſure he is dead."

"That he is indeed, Betty; and I wiſh he had been ſo before he entered theſe doors—I could but have loſt my pitiful annuity, and that I have done after all my plague."

"Dead! impoſſible!" cried Roſa.

"Dead! Sir Solomon Muſhroom dead!" exclaimed Lord Gauntlet.

"Ah,

"Ah, poor wicked old man! he is indeed; he never held up his head after he heard that odd creature, the blackamore Colonel—"

"General Buhanun, if you pleaſe, Ma'am."

"A General is he? Well, ſo much the better; if we ſink, the Colonel blackamore goes of courſe; but poor Sir Sol never looked up after he heard this General ſurvived."

Horace immediately carried this news to his friend, and the widow was conducted by Roſa to her dreſſing-room.

"Lord, Miſs Roſy!" cried Betty, "why your clothes will no more fit Madam Feverſham than they'll fit me; why ſhe is about as big as three of you. Suppoſed I go down to the forin ouſekeeper, and borrer ſome things of her; if they be a little matter too ſhort, Madam won't mind that; ſhe always loved to ſhew her legs, 'cauſe they are ſo andſome."

This oblique compliment to her perſon both ſoftened and gratified Lady Muſhroom. "Ay, Betty, my good girl," ſhe cried, "do—and get me ſomething to take, for I have neither eat nor ſlept ſince I was at Lady Denningcourt's yeſterday morning."

Roſa apologized for not offering her refreſhments. "But how, my dear Lady," ſhe added, "came you in this dreadful ſituation?"

"How, my dear! rather wonder I am alive.—Oh! you can never divine what I have endured! It was near evening before we got to our inn; and Per-

ſian, who is an exceeding good dreſſer of hair, and layer-on of *rouge*, had no ſooner made me a little decent, than in comes, rattling to the paltry inn (a poor place for people of our rank) a poſt-chaiſe and four. They called for horſes on to Delworth; and I, unfortunately hearing them, went to the window, merely out of curioſity, and, to my aſtoniſhment, ſaw that vulgar, freſh-coloured, healthy-looking creature, nurſe Dorothy—you remember her? ſhe uſed always to be haunting the dear diſagreeable Muſhroom—and with her the quondam Lady Lowder, as haggered and pale as—no matter what;—well, my dear, they ſaw me too; ſo I kept nodding—Betty knows my way;—up they came, and fell upon me like two furies;—that ſhocking Dorothy called me—yes, Miſs, ſhe called me a double-u! Oh, to think I ſhould live to be called a double-u!—'tis very hard!"

"When one don't not deſerve it eſpecially," joined Betty.

"But had you nobody to protect you?" aſked Roſa; "for I am ſure, againſt Lady Lowder, and ſuch a companion, you had need of protection."

"Oh no, my dear, it was the higheſt amuſement in the world to the people of the houſe. The nurſe, who avowed herſelf to be the mother of the two dear diſagreeable Muſhrooms, ſaid I had got her huſband—the daughter ſaid I had got her clothes and property; both of them fixed their talons in my face and neck, and you ſee how they have mauled me. I ran ſhrieking

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ing into poor wicked Sir Sol's room; they followed: Mr. Turgid was ſitting cloſe by his bedſide, with pen, ink, and paper. Before I could ſpeak, Lady Lowder ſnatched the paper out of Turgid's hand;—and finding he was making a will to give all poor Sir Sol's money to charitable uſes, ſhe fell into ſham fits; her mother raved at poor wicked Sir Sol, and aſked him if he was not aſhamed, with one foot in the grave, to have double-u's with him. Sir Sol ſaid (and God forgive him! he looked too ſpiteful for a dying man) he knew too well he had one foot in the grave, and was ſenſible that double-u's were not fit company for dying men, and therefore deſired ſhe and her daughter would inſtantly leave the room. As to that lady (meaning me), I have married her; ſhe may be as bad as you, for aught I know—and I hope ſhe is, that you may be mutual plagues to each other. Mr. Turgid, I wiſh to ſign my will. There was no will to be ſigned—the dear diſagreeable Muſhroom had torn it to atoms—ſo old Turgid went out to write another, and then both the furies fell on me again;—and I do think that they would have killed me, had not Dorothy happened to find out poor Sir Sol was in a fit; then ſhe began crying and making a horrid noiſe about him;—for my part, I was ready to die with fear of them all. He recovered a little, and inſiſted on their leaving him; they would not ſtir without me. Some doctors, as they were called, came in, and talked a vaſt deal of nonſenſe, as doctors always do,

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do, you know: however, they agreed in one thing, which was to clear the room. The woman of the houſe was a conjurer;—ſhe was ſure, by Dorothy's looks, ſhe was a wife, and by mine that I was a miſtreſs; ſo, as ſhe loved nothing in the world better than an honeſt woman, except it was an honeſt man, ſhe was very civil to her, and very rude to me. They took poſſeſſion of my apartments, and all my things, while I crept to Perſian's room, and hid myſelf, till we were all alarmed by the ſound of a piſtol, which, as I never thought poor Sir Sol had the courage to hurt himſelf, I little expected came from his apartment. His valet, in a ſhort time, came to the door of Perſian's chamber;—I thought it was the frightful Dorothy, and begged ſhe would not ſpeak: he rapped again—at laſt Perſian anſwered; 'I am come to tell my Lady,' ſaid he, 'as I know ſhe *is* my Lady, and Doll Tear-ſheet is *not*, that my maſter has cured himſelf—he has taken a pill.'—'Ah, heaven!' I cried, 'I care nothing about him nor Doll; all I want is to get out of their way.'—'My maſter has ſhot himſelf,' ſaid he, 'and I am come to your Ladyſhip, by Mr. Turgid's deſire, for orders.'—My dear Miſs Walſingham, I was as much ſhocked at the man's callous indifference to his maſter's fate as at the ſuicide, which was very ſilly in poor Sir Sol, for I really don't think he could have lived many days. However, the man ſtill teaſed me for orders, and I heard Dorothy's and Lady Lowder's voices quite ring the houſe; ſo, I ſaid,

I ſhould

I ſhould give no orders, but to get a chaiſe to carry me to Lord Gauntlet's;—ſo here I am, my dear; and I am ſure, if you don't give me ſomething to bathe my bruiſes, and let me go to bed, I ſhall certainly follow poor Sir Sol, without a piſtol."

"Gracious goodneſs!" cried Betty, "ſee what a misfortunate thing it is for men to keep on the high ropes; I am ſure I ſhall go and tell John Brown of this as ſoon as ever I have tucked Madam Feverſham up, and waſhed her ſcratches with aquabuſade."

Roſa, pale and really ſhocked at the dreadful end of the bad man, left Lady Muſhroom on bed, and joined Lady Gauntlet and her ſon. The General was indiſpoſed, and declined dining; and Roſa, as ſoon as ſhe heard it, went to his dreſſing-room to pay her duty; he had returned to his old habit of walking about the room, notwithſtanding his lameneſs;—the ſalt rheum filled his eyes, and the tremor on his voice was ſtrong when he anſwered her affectionate inquiries.

"You know, my ſweet girl," ſaid he, "I have a daughter, and you a ſiſter?"

"Yes, my deareſt father, ſhe has long been the ſiſter of my heart."

"Is *ſhe* like *her* ſiſter, my Roſa? Does ſhe ſmile, and ſpeak, and look like *you?*"

"She does all this very pretty;—I am no judge of likeneſſes;—but muſt we dine without you, my father?"

"I have an inveterate head-ach."

"This is the conſequence of ſhutting yourſelf up; if you would walk out;—ah! you cannot conceive what a delightful ramble Horace and I have had this morning to dear Lady Denningcourt's."

"If I were Lady Gauntlet, I ſhould be jealous of this Lady Denningcourt."

"Oh no! you would love her;—Oh my dear father, you would love Lady Denningcourt better—"

"Than I love you?"

"Infinitely;—ſhe is ſuch an angel;—come to the window, and let me ſhew you ſome of her charms.—You ſee that little village?"

"I ſee a village, not a very little one."

"That is Denningcourt—thoſe buildings——"

The dinner bell rung.

"Go, my Roſa, you ſhall tell me more after you have dined—I will take coffee with you; I have letters to write, and arrangements to make, when my head permits (and he led her reluctant to the door); I muſt take my rice alone."

Roſa kiſſed his hand, and was received by Horace at the entrance of the eating-room.

Lady Gauntlet had, in the meantime, paid a viſit to the widow, who, comfortably tucked up and entertained by her former ſervant, Betty, was very well diſpoſed to forget all her troubles, had ſhe not been reminded of them by the Counteſs.

The ſhocking end of the wretch Sir Solomon afforded no triumph to ſuch hearts as thoſe he had ſo cruelly injured. Lady Gauntlet begged it might not be mentioned, and the happy mother ſat down between her two darlings, to talk on a more intereſting ſubject; ſhe related what had paſſed between her and the General, who, ſhe believed, intended to have an early interview with his daughter.

Roſa alſo gave the little hiſtory of her ramble, and Horace was eloquent in his praiſe of Lady Denningcourt.

The General, as he promiſed, joined them at coffee, and hinted a deſign of following a letter he had been writing to London.

Lady Gauntlet remonſtrated; Mrs. Croak was certainly more able to travel to him, under her huſband's protection, than he to go to her; ſhe begged he would permit her to invite them down to Delworth; you will, ſhe added, only embarraſs them at their farm.

"I do not mean to embarraſs them, but I ſhall certainly remove them from their farm; but who are theſe? do you expect viſiters?"

Lady Gauntlet juſt glanced the hind wheels of two carriages, which drove round to the back part of the houſe; but Roſa, who had ſeen the livery, coloured, and overpowered by a preſentiment of ſomething extraordinary, which ſhe could not underſtand, retired, trembling and diſconcerted, behind Lady Gauntlet,

whiſpering, "It is Lady Denningcourt's chariot and family coach."

"Lady Denningcourt's!" exclaimed Lady Gauntlet.

"What! already does ſhe return your viſit?" ſaid the General; "I wonder you are not a ſpoiled girl, Roſa—but you will make my apology—I am not fit for ladies' company."

"Where, where is ſhe?" from the hall electrified the General:—"Where, where is ſhe?" thrilled on his ear. He aroſe—he felt no lameneſs—he darted towards the door;—it was thrown open—a lady entered, followed by a group of people:—his arms expand involuntarily—they receive the fainting form of her he had ever, and only loved;—her, on whom in exile, in ſickneſs, in priſon, memory hung in ecſtacy; and from whom, though he knew ſhe had given herſelf to another, his heart, his honour, nor his love had ever ſtrayed. He trembled with agony, with joy, with grief;—he was not able to bear the precious burthen to a chair—he wanted ſupport himſelf!

"It is my dear Lady Denningcourt!" cried Roſa, flying to her, while Lady Gauntlet, aſſiſted by the people who followed, carried her near the air.

"Oh Elinor! dear Elinor!" ſaid the General, in a trembling voice, the ſalt rheum flowing down his cheeks; "It is ſhe!—it is herſelf;—her voice, like the laſt awful ſummons, would raiſe my ſoul from the duſt.

duſt.—Oh ever lovely and beloved, ſweet partner of my fond heart! what fate, what incident has once more bleſſed my ſight with her angelic form!—revive, my Elinor, revive!—She hears me not!—my ſoul melts in tenderneſs at ſight of her—it annihilates time and ſpace; it is no longer the battered, ſickly, way-worn ſoldier; no longer the wretched, baniſhed exile—but the happy Wallace Buhanun, adoring his own Elinor in the wood of Athelane!—But ſhe, Oh God! ſhe remembers me as the murderer of her brother!—as a wretch, who revives from death to interrupt her felicity!—to diſhonour her with prior claims!—Oh my Elinor! fear it not—I can eaſier die to ſeal thy peace, than live to blaſt it."

"Ye ſal nae du ain nor tither, an ye wull herken tull your eild frind, Moggy M'Laurin," cried the old dame, walking forward in a ſtately pace, with Mrs. J. Croak on one hand, and Mrs. Garnet on the other.

"She recovers! ſhe breathes! amiable, dear Lady Denningcourt!—See, Sir!—"

In raiſing her eyes for the firſt moment from Lady Denningcourt, Roſa beheld Mrs. Moggy M'Laurin and her two ſupporters.

"Oh!" ſhe ſhrieked, flying with an involuntary motion towards her, "Elinor!" but ſhe inſtantly recoiled; her eyes met the emaciated, yet unwieldy form, panting for breath, and the hollow jaundiced eye of Mrs. Garnet.

All the ignominy of her origin, the inebriety of her mother, and the vulgarity of her ſtep-father, at once ſtruck on her memory;—what connexions, what relatives were thoſe to introduce to the noble owners of the manſion—to acknowledge in the face of their domeſtics!

Lady Denningcourt had not yet recovered her ſenſes. Lady Gauntlet, attentive only to her, did not obſerve, and therefore could not feel, the cruel embarraſſment of Roſa's mind;—Lord Gauntlet was obſerving what paſſed with eager attention—and ſhe even fancied a coldneſs in his aſtoniſhed glance.

Mrs. Croak, with downcaſt eyes, ſtood transfixed to one ſpot: ſhe made no effort to ſpeak or move.

Roſa, bewildered, humbled, and diſcouraged, again fixed her eyes on Mrs. Garnet, who had moved round Mrs. Moggy M'Laurin near to Mrs. J. Croak.

"My child!" ſhe murmured, "my dear Roſa!"

Roſa's face changed in a moment from pale to ſcarlet:—This mother then knew her; ſhe was come to claim her maternal right;—Oh! where ſhould ſhe hide the diſgrace!—yet, had ſhe not been kind to her! had ſhe not offered her a home! nay, had there not been times when that home appeared to be her only reſource!—Oh why then this unnatural, this unconquerable repugnance!—Again ſhe met the hollow glance of this mother's eye; a tear trembled in it; Mr. Garnet, with his dark coat, red pluſh waiſtcoat, lank hair, fringed cravat, and large round hat, ſtepped forward

forward to wipe it off—to hold volatiles to her noſtrils, and to ſay, "Take comfort, Roſy; thee beeſt a great ſinner, Roſebud, but there is joy in heaven over a ſinner that repenteth; thee ſhan't want for nothing living nor dead; thy girl ſhall ſhare my ſhiners with little Phil."

"Oh God!" cried Roſa, retreating towards where Lady Denningcourt was reviving, and hiding her face with both her hands—"Oh God! my mother!"

"Yes, Roſa, yes, yes, yes," cried Lady Denningcourt, folding her languid arms round her, "I am thy mother—thy very mother!—come to my heart, Oh thou child of inſtinct, of love! how has my ſoul doated on thee preſent, and languiſhed for thee abſent!—how has my vital blood acknowledged thee!—Oh was that a form, a face, a mind to be expoſed to the angry elements! and was my only child ſent to beg a ſcanty morſel, while thy mother was decked in ſplendour!—Oh my brave brother! gallant noble Dungaron! dear broken-hearted ſainted mother, and thou inexorable father, did ye behold my child—my innocent, beautiful child, the rightful heir of all your riches, left to beg her bread from the niggard hand of common charity!—did ye behold this!—and are your angry ſpirits not glutted with vengeance?

"Oh Wallace! how have grief and remorſe changed us both ſince laſt we parted; but my ſoul would not dare to greet thine, had I not ſuch a mediatrix—be-

hold her, Wallace, my child and thine!—Why does the hope of my life tremble? dearest girl, no longer Rosa, but Elinor."

Rosa did indeed tremble; her respiration became difficult;—amazement chained every tongue most interested in this strange scene; the General, scarce daring to trust his senses, seated Rosa on a sofa by Lady Denningcourt, and without a quiet nerve himself, whispered her to be composed.

Rosa glanced fearfully at Mrs. Garnet, by whose side Mrs. J. Croak still stood, tears deluging the cheeks of the latter, while all the defeatures of guilt, in strong perspiration, stood on the brow of the former.

"Yes, my child, once more look at that bad woman, and that innocent impostor;—it is the peculiar trait of thy noble blood to forgive:—I trust I do forgive them, but they are obnoxious to my sight."

Mrs. J. Croak rushed forward prostrate at our heroine's feet; "Oh!" she cried, "pardon, pardon my mother! I do not ask you to forgive me—you know I am innocent; even my nature, ignorant as I was of fraud, is innocent—I felt I was indeed an impostor."

Mrs. Garnet, who was in a dropsy, from a complication of disorders, had moved forward, and, with the assistance of her husband, kneeled by her daughter;—little Phil remembering his old favourite, though he dared not claim acquaintance, also ran forward,

and

and put up his little hands—"Pray do forgive mammy," he cried, "ſhe is your *name-ſake*."

Roſa, all amazement, knew not what to believe; yet it was a ſolid truth that ſhe was claſped by turns in the arms of her patroneſs and in thoſe of her patron; ſhe heard herſelf addreſſed by the moſt endearing epithets; the tears of the General and Lady Denningcourt blended with her own; ſhe ſaw the moſt amiable of women throw herſelf ſuddenly on her knees; heard her adjure the General to join her in wonder, adoration, and thanks to that God who guided his ſad wanderings to Penry; that opened his heart to the miſery of his own and only child;—ſhe beheld the anxious ſurpriſe in the fine countenance of Lady Gauntlet, and met the tender gaze of fond ſolicitude from her ſon; all this real—yet how could it be?—how could ſhe, who had ſo often felt the bitter pang of ſhame for a parent's vices, who ſo clearly remembered the beggary from which ſhe was relieved—how could ſhe believe herſelf the beloved child of one of the firſt, as well as beſt of women—of her kind patron and benefactor?

But in the meanwhile her friend, her juvenile companion, was humbled to the earth before her; the woman, whom, though ſhe had been cruelly abandoned by her, ſhe had conſidered as her mother, was in a dying ſtate, yet kneeling, weeping, and begging pardon;—ſhe looked at Lady Denningcourt; all the ſoul of ma-

ternal tenderneſs was in her eyes—all the energy of fond affection in her embrace: "Yes, Roſa, I comprehend the intereſting expreſſion of your eye—you *are mine*—Wallace Buhanun, him in whoſe praiſe I have delighted to hear you eloquent, he is your father;—compoſe yourſelf—we will have no ſecrets!"

"That you are mine, Roſa, I need no proof," ſaid the General; "your reſemblance to this your noble mother, and the ſound of your voice, ſo familiar and ſo precious to my aural faculties, firſt attracted, and then rivetted my regard; yes, I *know*, I *feel* you are mine; but if we are to pardon this poor wretch, whom I perfectly remember, let us do it like ourſelves;—you ſee her ſituation."

Lady Denningcourt had ſeen her child—ſeen the dear and natural reſemblance of her Wallace accounted for, and ſhe ſaw nothing elſe; but Mrs. Garnet was now lifted up, and ſeated on an arm-chair, with her head reſting on Mrs. Croak's boſom.

"I cannot help thinking this is all an agreeable viſion," cried Lady Gauntlet;—and though it was very ſeldom that lady was miſtaken, yet it did happen juſt now; for there was neither enchantment, nor (any more than in the General's ſtory) any thing unprecedented in the myſtery Mrs. Moggy M'Laurin ſtepped forward, with great ſolemnity, to elucidate.

It will be ſeen, on recurring to the third chapter of this volume of this famous ſtory, that Mrs. Moggy

Moggy M'Laurin hinted to the nurſe who brought Elinor's child to meet her at the milk-houſe, that the mother of her charge had "mickle ſiller;" that ten golden guineas confirmed the aſſertion, and that Mrs. Moggy M'Laurin explained the merke under the bairn's herte, to be of her ain doing with gunpooder.

Mr. and Mrs. Wilkins were unfortunately both of them fond of liquor, and when things, as the poor penitent now confeſſed, were going to rack and ruin, then it was that ſhe ſtudied the proceſs of marking with gunpowder. But though ſhe ſucceeded tolerably in the A B, ſhe was obliged to make a ſplaſh, as if the outlines of the coronet had run together, for that was a ſort of mark it was not ſo eaſy to imitate; though the fraud was ſucceſsful—though ſhe ſubſtituted her own child for the neglected infant whoſe "mither had ſae mickle ſiller," without ſuſpicion—and though ſhe ſaw it dreſſed and educated like a gentlewoman, ſhe never knew a moment's peace after parting with her own child; her unfortunate propenſity to drinking increaſed; her huſband, the confidant of her iniquity, was idle; inſtead of feeling compaſſion for the child they were ſo deeply injuring, every word ſhe learned to ſpeak, even her little wants, reproached and provoked them—and it was not merely ſtarving, but ill uſage ſhe ſuffered, till Providence threw her on the charity of her own father.

Mrs. Moggy M'Laurin declared that et wes the haundee woork of the Lorde thaut put et entull her hede

hede tull tauk abooten Meſs Roſa, tull the gude weef, Maiſtreſs Broon, wha teld her aw aboot a merke of a croon and twa letters, aun when ſhe luked at et herſel, aun foond her ain merke, efter hauving allood the merke on the tother laſſie—gude Lorde! ſhe were leek tull dee, an culd nae reſte neet nore day, tull ſhe ganged tull the ſooth tull Doctor Croak, wha ganged alang we her tull ain Maiſtreſs Garnet, who, pure bodie, was unco ſeek.

The truth was, Mrs. Garnet had made ſo many journies to Penry, under pretence of conſulting the Doctor on her illneſs, but in fact to appeaſe her conſcience by a diſcovery of her guilt, that he ſuſpected the truth before Mrs. Moggy M'Laurin appeared; and as his daughter-in-law had teſtified an inſuperable diſlike to him, at the ſame time ſhe was conferring all ſorts of benefits on his brother, he, who knew no joy equal to revenge, was as eager to convince her ſhe was the daughter of a beggar, as he had before been humble to Roſa.

Mrs. Garnet made an unreſerved confeſſion, and, as the leaſt atonement for her guilt, readily agreed to accompany Mrs. Moggy M'Laurin and her daughter, of whom ſhe grew doatingly fond, to Cumberland;—and thus ends the hiſtory of the Beggar—for the acknowledged daughter of ſo rich a father and mother, and the affianced bride of an Earl, can no longer be conſidered in that light. It is ſcarce neceſſary to ſay, that a double union ſoon took place at Delworth;—the ſame hour

hour that gave the lovely daughter of General Buhanun to the enraptured Earl of Gauntlet, witneſſed the re-union of her parents.

The clothes, equipage, company, preſentations, and all the long *et ceteras* of ſplendid marriages, would very decently add another chapter to this hiſtory, if it were not already too long.

The young lady readers are therefore at liberty to deck the fair bride in what clothes and jewels they pleaſe; they may give to the Earl all the raptures the moſt warm imagination can fancy; they may excite the admiration of one part of the world, and the envy of the other, to any exceſs; they may feed the hungry, clothe the naked, viſit the ſick, relieve the priſoner in a manner more feeling and generous than ever was done before; and be certain they cannot overrate the magnificence, the tenderneſs, the popularity, or the charity of the Earl and Counteſs of Gauntlet;—but having left theſe important articles to the fancy of the young reader, the author concludes her hiſtory by a brief diſpoſal of the other conſpicuous characters.

Mrs. Croak, the foſter-ſiſter of the heroine, ſtill poſſeſſes her warm affection; and after having ſeen the remains of her mother, who died at Delworth, decently interred, ſhe returned to her own farm, with more riches than her huſband or herſelf deſired, and far more happy than ſhe could have been at Athelane, though married to its heir.

Lady

Lady Denningcourt *did know* Wallace Buhanun; her laſt act, previous to her re-union with him, was an unreſerved renunciation of all the property ſhe poſſeſſed from the deceaſed Earl of Denningcourt in favour of his ſon, not even excepting the jointure-houſe.

The Earl of Denningcourt's marriage had taken place before this acquiſition of fortune; and as he immediately ſet off with his bride on a tour to Italy, it was never ſuſpected about Denningcourt that the beautiful young Counteſs was the former miſtreſs at the caſtle; and it is, we hope, needleſs to add, that a conſtant harmony ſubſiſted between the two neighbouring Earls and their families.

Admiral Herbert died the following year, full of years, peace, and honour, in the arms of his grandſon and heir. Captain Seagrove, from the hour of his demiſe, became part of the Dowager Lady Gauntlet's eſtabliſhment, who, though poſſeſſor of the Grange during her life, and a conſtant ſummer viſiter at her ſon's and Lady Elinor Buhanun's, fixed her home at Bath, on account of ſome ſpaſms in her ſtomach, for which the waters were preſcribed; and there meeting Mrs. Harley, ſhe was ſo pleaſed with her lady-like manners and true goodneſs of heart, that an invitation, which, coming from the noble Magdalena, muſt have been made with dignified ſincerity, was accepted by that worthy woman:—ſhe ſtill lives with the Dowager

Dowager Counteſs of Gauntlet, and has every year the pleaſure to witneſs with her the felicity of her beloved pupil—not, however, without feeling an equal intereſt in the more humble happineſs of Mrs. J. Croak.

General Buhanun purchaſed the fine eſtate of Caſtle Lowder, of the Earl of that name, in the neighbourhood of Lady Hopely; and as he, with his amiable Elinor, made their native country their home, there really did appear no end of Betty's ſufferens; for, beſides that John Brown never ſo entirely diſmounted from the high ropes as to forget how ſick his yellow face made *ſome folks*, ſhe was either obliged to live in that devilditch place Skutlun, or never have an ouſe of her own; for John proteſted, that as God left *him* when he left his maſter, with whom he was always ſafe and happy, he never—no, never would be parted from him again.

The General's eyes filled with the ſoft rheum; he made John Brown his ſteward; and as there was annexed to this important office a pretty genteel *ouſe*, not among the *riffraff*, between ſettling of faſhions, diſplaying her knowledge of high life and viſiting, Mrs. Brown contrives to exiſt with a tolerable degree of comfort; for though an extraordinary glaſs of ale does ſometimes bring up former ſufferens, as John is a poor ingnorant man, ſhe don't mind it no more nor nothen.

Mrs.

Mrs. Buhanun grew again into importance after her daughter became a Counteſs; Mr. Frazer reſumed his former ſervility, and might have yet been a great gainer by his adventure in matrimony, had he not unfortunately been honoured with the title of father by the one dirty female domeſtic he had kept at Caſtle Gowrand.

Mrs. Buhanun laughed at the affair; divorced her huſband, and now lives at Caſtle Gowrand with her beautiful Jeſſy, wiſer, and of courſe more reſpected, than ever.

Emma Buhanun, whom Roſa ſent for to Delworth, recovered her health; and being introduced to the Athelane family, the diſappointment and deſperation of the deſpairing Angus was ſo terrific, that within a few months, he, to the great annoyance of all the young ladies of his own clan, made a Buhanun the future Ducheſs of Athelane, with the full approbation of that reſpectable nobleman, the Duke his uncle, with whom they now reſide.

Doctor Cameron is ſtill the nobleſt work of God, "an honeſt man," and he is alſo the moſt eſteemed character of the world, "a *rich* one."

Mr. Steward has an appointment in the Revenue, of conſiderable profit, beſides his paternal inheritance.

Mrs. Moggy is returned to her ain wee hooſe, tull tele aw her frinds the muckle ſarvice ſhe did the clan of Athelane.

Lord

Lord Lowder had every poſſible diſpoſition to divorce his wife, but the Lady had only been convicted of *one faux pas*, whereas ſhe could recriminate many on his Lordſhip; ſo the handſome Sir Jacob, after loſing all his bets, eſcaped to his mother, without being quite done up by heavy damages for *crim. con.* ſo much wiſer and better for his experience, that he totally diſcarded the Reverend Mr. Jolter, and married the ſixth pretty daughter of the Rector of his own pariſh, by whom he has a large family of fine children; while the Counteſs ſpends the income her Lord cannot help allowing her, on whatever pretty fellow happens to ſtrike her fancy;—it is true, that by theſe indulgences ſhe has now loſt her beauty, her voice, and her health; but ſhe will live all the days of her ſhort life, notwithſtanding—*if ſhe can.*

The once beautiful Counteſs of Gauntlet, ſhe who ſo lately was adored by the men, and hated by the women, could not ſupport exiſtence in an obſcure part of Switzerland without the aid of ſtrong cordials, which, from renovaters of her low ſpirits, became, by exceſſive uſe, ſtrong rapid poiſon: ſhe died unlamented even by her own family.

The *ci-devant* Earl, with his daughters and daughter-in-law, live abroad together on a handſome penſion from the Earl, his injured nephew.

If any thing could put a young Major of the Guards out of countenance, Major Montreville muſt have bluſhed

bluſhed at the family anecdotes in public circulation; but as that is a thing totally out of nature, the Major may be heard of as a prodigious daſher at moſt of the gambling-houſes and brothels about town.

Mrs. Woudbe has, by dint of her own aſſurance and her huſband's credulity, got over the debts and the jewels, and threatens the town with a maſquerade-ball, which will out-do all her former out-doings; but as ſhe is at this time deeply enamoured of a young actor, as vain and ridiculous as herſelf, it is expected Mr. Woudbe muſt at laſt be reduced to the neceſſity of turning his wife ſhiftleſs out of doors.

Sir Solomon Muſhroom dying inteſtate, and Mrs. Dorothy Wright having, by her premature viſit, proved the illegitimacy of the two heireſſes, Lady Muſhroom would have taken quiet poſſeſſion of his fortune, with the thirds of which ſhe would have been content; but the iraſcible Dolly got a caveat entered againſt the letters of adminiſtration, and by dint of labour and perſeverance, at length diſcovered the next of kin to the late Solomon, in a cellar at St. Giles's.

Mr. Lemuel Supple undertook to ſee theſe poor people righted; and accordingly, after diſputing the legality of Lady Muſhroom's unconſummated marriage; after moving it from court to court, making giants, and then deſtroying them, he threw the whole buſineſs into Chancery, and the probability is, that Muſhroom-Place will, at ſome future period, be again ſold under a decree of that court to pay coſts.

Lady

Lady Muſhroom had, however, wiſely taken care of as many valuable trifles as, when ſold, added ſuch comfort to her income, that having alſo the wiſdom to retire to her houſe at Penry, enabled her to ſupport her new rank in that village; and as ſhe is known to be acquainted with three Counteſſes, and Honourables innumerable, nothing can be more the thing than her Ladyſhip *at Penry*.

Dr. Croak's practice falling quite off, as his chronic diſeaſes increaſed, Madam Bawſky began to think of her *conſcience*; and having conſulted her friend Mary the Buxom on the buſineſs, it was agreed, *nem. con.* that though it might be very pleaſant to manage a country apothecary's houſe, beat his old mother, and baniſh all his relations, while he could keep a carriage, and pay and receive viſits from the quality of Penry; yet that to live with a *poor* gouty old fellow, who could do neither one nor the other, was more ſuitable to an old garden woman, than a perſon of Mrs. Bawſky's refined ideas;—ſhe accordingly made certain propoſitions to her huſband, which being rejected, ſhe accepted the invitation of her friend to live with her; and thoſe amiable women, Mrs. Waltringham and Madam Bawſky, are united by ſuch a congeniality of ſoul, that to this hour they are laughed at, deſpiſed, and viſited by all the quality of Penry; while the poor Doctor, glad now to recognize his relations, is boarded by his ſon with his good ſiſter-in-law, whoſe

whoſe philanthropy, happily for him, is unconquerable.

Madam La Croix is ſtill in vaſt requeſt among the higher orders of people who deal with French milliners, and ſometimes carries a young friend to Lord Aaron Horſemagog's country villa, where that Nobleman, in ſpite of debility and grey hairs, continues to be as amuſing as ever.

FINIS.